1250. h. 5.

# *PEACE.*

# REASONS

WHY

# TERMS OF PEACE

SHOULD BE OFFERED

TO

# *THE FRENCH NATION.*

ADDRESSED TO

## THE INHABITANTS OF GREAT BRITAIN,

THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF THEIR

## REPRESENTATIVES IN PARLIAMENT.

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TO

THOSE FEW BUT NOBLE CHARACTERS

WHO HAVE UNIFORMLY

*OPPOSED THE WAR AGAINST FRANCE,*

IN

BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT,

THE FOLLOWING PAMPHLET

IS INSCRIBED,

WITH THE UTMOST

DEFERENCE AND RESPECT,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

John Raithby.
Student of the Law.

# REASONS, &c.

My Countrymen,

IF you will give a patient attention to this addreſs, you will find in it, I truſt, thoſe truths and that moderation which have ever been valuable to Engliſhmen, and which, if they have ever been neceſſary to them, are peculiarly neceſſary now.

I do not promiſe to entertain you with novelties, but I will endeavour to lead you into a recurrence towards thoſe antient principles which were once thought worthy of the admiration and the ſupport of your anceſtors; for which they did not heſitate to plead with firmneſs, to fight with bravery, and to die with fortitude; which ought to be as dear to you, who muſt know with what diligence they were acquired, and with what care they have been preſerved for you; and which you ought not to ſacrifice to the novel dogmas of innovating doctrines.

Whatever is new to our perceptions too generally becomes the immediate object of our purſuit; we endeavour to ſeize upon it with an indiſcriminating eagerneſs, we do not give ourſelves time to reflect if its principles be perni-

cious or ſalutary; we have not ſeen or we have not heard of it before, it is therefore delightful, and it engages our regard; but let us recollect, that the indulgence of this paſſion for novelties has never been eſteemed the characteriſtic of a wiſe people, that it undermines the foundation of our virtues, that it robs us of our energy, that it obſcures our dignity.

There is a majeſtic plainneſs, a grand ſimplicity in truth, which ennobles the mind that perceives its influence; its dictates are at once ſublime and irreſiſtible; its leſſons will teach us to diſcriminate between virtue and the appearance of virtue; they will teach us to affix a proper value to the various poſſeſſions of life.

Under the influence of truth alone we ſhall be able to reach the utmoſt degree of clearneſs and certainty which ſeems at preſent permitted to the human judgment; and it is becauſe ſo few have yielded themſelves up implicitly to this influence, that ſo few have any ſettled principles of judgment at all. The opinion of the multitude has ever been liable to quick and ſudden changes, becauſe, amidſt the turbulence of popular concuſſions, the ſmall ſtill voice of Truth is uſually loſt: of how great importance, therefore, it is, to form a right eſtimation of the nature of things as they ariſe, let them teſtify, who have obſerved the various calamities which have ariſen from the prevalence of error and falſehood in the world.

Submitting then to this divine influence, permit me to addreſs you upon a ſubject which cannot too frequently be agitated amongſt you; in which your perſonal intereſt is concerned, upon which the welfare, nay, perhaps, the exiſtence of your country depends, and from which your poſterity may derive the continued dignity of independence

under

under a Britiſh government, or become the debaſed ſubjects of a foreign power.

War or peace with the French nation is the ſubject which has ſo powerful a claim to your attention; and whether the debates which it has juſt agitated in your Parliament, or the preſent ſituation of your country, or the cauſes of the war, or the prevalent ideas on the Continent, or the events of the laſt campaign be conſidered, what weighty conſiderations does it not involve, with what great events is it not fraught?

Are theſe conſiderations of importance to you? do you feel yourſelves intereſted in the diſcuſſions of your Senate? is your country dear to you? are the cauſes of the war worthy of your enquiry? are the prevailing ideas on the Continent of moment in your eſtimation? do the events of the laſt campaign demand your attention? Bend therefore your thoughts to this important ſubject, let it engage your earneſt enquiries, do not treat it as a common topic of politics, do not ſlight it as a matter in which you have no concern!

The hiſtory of your country has never yet preſented to your contemplation a moment ſo awful as the preſent; it has never yet recorded events, in the conſequences of which your happineſs and your honour have been ſo deeply involved—in ſuch a moment then, whatever excites to thought, whatever awakens to recollection, whatever arouſes to energy, whatever calls to unanimity, is valuable; becauſe in ſuch a moment if you do not think, if you do not recollect yourſelves, if you are not energetic, if you preſerve not unanimity, you muſt fall.

Among the ſurrounding nations you have long been conſpicuous for your bravery, for your ſtrength, and for your

riches; and they, who have remarked the various qualities of different climates and countries, have held you up as excellent for your wiſdom and for your love of liberty; but remember that bravery, ſtrength and riches may be rendered uſeleſs by miſapplication, and that wiſdom and the love of liberty may be loſt amidſt the diſſipations of ambition or the indolence of a falſe ſecurity.

Remember too, that *that* which has once afforded ſafety and protection, may ſometime become inadequate to that ſalutary purpoſe, from the influence of the mutations to which humanity is liable: new councils, new opinions, new ſyſtems, may produce a neceſſity for new modes of policy in the operations of war, and in the adminiſtration of civil juſtice; may produce a change in our eſtimation of political good, and may, conſequently, render thoſe things important to us of which we have never heard before; and, on the contrary, rob of their ſplendor, thoſe honours which have excited our reverence, our emulation, or our envy.

Hence, there is not, nor can there perhaps exiſt any political ſyſtem entirely independent of ſurrounding ſyſtems, while there is an intimate connection between the nations which have embraced them; and as ſyſtem is only opinion carried into effect, that ſyſtem which is the reſult of general opinion muſt be proportionably powerful, and will, conſequently, carry with it all the accuſtomed efficacy of a majority; a ſyſtem, thus generated, will have different influences, as the genius and the cuſtoms of nations differ, but in every nation it muſt be modified into one ſhape or other; to reſiſt it wholly will be vain.

And here, perhaps, the moſt arduous taſk of a ſtateſman may appear; to diſtinguiſh between the extravagant demands of the multitude, whether excited by the clamours

of

of factious individuals, or by the force of momentary grievances, and that regular ſyſtematic change of opinion, which is produced by the acquiſition of knowledge, requires no ordinary ſtrength of intellect, no limited acquaintance with the human character, and this, not becauſe there is not a material difference in the nature of theſe emotions, but becauſe the firſt manifeſtations of them too often wear a cloſe reſemblance to each other.

This reſemblance has its ſource in the weakneſs of humanity: ambition, vanity, and ſelf-love, will continually infeſt the pureſt motives, and the moſt virtuous actions; and bad men, who are wholly inſtigated by theſe dangerous paſſions, are ever upon the watch to take advantage of any movement of the public mind, and to mingle the leven of faction with the juſt complaints and decent reſolves of an injured and enlightened nation: they inſtil their poiſon with a ſubtilty which the moſt guarded vigilance cannot always prevent; and the cry of a whole people is confounded by a weak governor with the innovations of ſuch diſcontented individuals; the modeſt requeſts of a loyal people are diſregarded or calumniated, as the tumultuous menaces of diſaffected men, till the fatal miſtake involve the devoted country in all the calamities of civil diſcord.

Yet however difficult the diſcrimination between theſe appearances may be, it muſt be made: the ſpirit of a people may for a moment be repreſſed by the ſtrong arm of power, their intentions may be miſrepreſented by the indecent tongue of intereſt, their efforts may be oppoſed by the wicked phalanx of the ſlaves of ambition; but, if truth and juſtice are their ſupport, they muſt triumph when the period ſhall arrive in which firmneſs will be diſtinguiſhed from rebellion, and public ſpirit from faction.

But

But it is not by ignorance alone that the voice of a nation is thus confounded with the murmurs of a faction; they are often wilfully miſtaken by a corrupt and deſigning Miniſter: if he is determined that his maſter ſhall not attend to the prayers of his ſubjects, he will not fail to ſeize the pretence to repreſent them as the daring intruſions of reſtleſs innovation; but the hour will come, in which ſuch a Miniſter will be taught that if he had laboured to diſcriminate with wiſdom, rather than to confound with cunning; if he had attended to the nature of public opinion, and had ſubmitted to the confluence of events, he would have been hailed as the ſaviour of his country, while he is execrated as its deſtroyer.

I will not dwell any longer upon the introduction to my ſubject, but it may not have been wholly unneceſſary to ſtate it thus far, as it may be the ground of ſome of the arguments which I intend to offer to you in the different parts of this addreſs.

The doctrine indeed, towards which it tends, and which it will be my endeavour to ſupport, takes its riſe in the connection which England has formed with the continental powers, and its importance will doubtleſs be found proportionate to the nature and extent of that connection; for if the antient ſyſtems of thoſe powers are compelled to give way to new and more powerful ſyſtems, the change ought to be marked by you with the moſt jealous and provident obſervation; and you muſt well conſider that if it is oppoſed by you, it will be neceſſary that juſtice alone ſhould dictate and ſupport the oppoſition.

It appears to have been the policy of late adminiſtrations, to carry this connection beyond the limits which the inducements ariſing from an increaſing commerce ſeemed to preſcribe;

preſcribe; how far this may prove beneficial or deſtructive to the national intereſt, is not the ſubject of my preſent enquiry; it is ſufficient for my purpoſe that the connection exiſts, and that its exiſtence impoſes a ſtricter duty of watchfulneſs over the political movements of Europe.

The late Revolution in France has produced violent concuſſions on the continent; we have thought proper to take an active part in the important buſineſs, and it will be therefore my taſk to examine how far we have been called upon to adopt ſuch a conduct by the duty I have juſt mentioned, and how far juſtice and policy have influenced our determination in this reſpect.

The principle upon which I mean to build my argument is in its own nature a very plain principle, yet it is every day either neglected or miſunderſtood; and from this neglect or miſunderſtanding moſt of our errors, both in politics and in morals, certainly proceed; it is ſimply this. The qualities which pervade the motives to an action, will appear in the action itſelf the moment it is begun, will continue to be its characteriſtics in its progreſs, and will infallibly mark its concluſion, if the action be a compleat one; nor can any modifications or pretences of the agent, change its eſſential nature, however refined or ſubtle they may be, or juſtify him in the common reſolution of continuing that action, if the principle of it be a defective one, from the idle conſideration that it is begun.

It muſt be granted, however, that this principle is ſuſceptible of modification, in proportion as the nature of the action is rather weak than vicious: an action which is impolitic in its beginning, it may, by a ſeries of accidents, become no longer impolitic to continue: that which may have been produced by folly or ignorance, a concurrence of

circumſtances

circumſtances may render adviſeable or even neceſſary to purſue; but that which has derived its birth from injuſtice, that which has had its beginning in untruth, can *never* change or moderate its nature! no events can juſtify its continuance; in every ſtage of its progreſs it will retain its original depravity, and, if its courſe be not interrupted by repentance, it muſt end in the ſame diſhonor in which it was begun!

I ſhall not heſitate to apply this principle to the conduct of your government in entering into the war; the attempt has been made to prove to you that it is a juſt and neceſſary war, and that, therefore, it ought to be continued for the purpoſe of procuring an eſtabliſhed peace; but if I can prove to you that it was unjuſt as well as impolitic in its origin, I do not fear to convince you that you ought to be anxious to put an end to it, ſince its continuance can only produce an accumulation of diſgrace and diſhonour to your country.

## CHAP. I.

WAR, in its own nature, is offenſive and diabolical; it partakes in no degree of thoſe gentle and endearing qualities, which mankind have concurred to admire and love; it aſſimilates in no ſhape to thoſe divine and genial ſentiments, which enlighten and dignify the human character.

Do we contemplate its origin, its progreſs, or its conſequences? in its origin, it is unjuſt, for it is founded in the ſuperiority of power; in its progreſs, it is direful, for it robs life of its preſent and its poſſible comforts; in its conſequences,

ſequences, it is hateful, for they are the undiſtinguiſhing foes of vice and virtue.

Its very appearance is odious and ſhameful; even the pride and ambition of the moſt inſatiable tyrants have ever appeared to be ſenſible of this. Hiſtory abounds with the falſe pretexts, the mean excuſes, the unprincely evaſions, which have been made the flimſy coverings of their real motives to war, by thoſe ſovereigns, who have been engaged in enterprizes of conqueſt and glory.

By its malign influences the beneficent purpoſes of humanity are overthrown; all ſocial commerce is deſtroyed; all order is perverted; the expected harveſt of the huſbandman is cut off; the moſt beautiful countries are disfigured; the moſt fruitful lands are deſolated; it deſcribes, as with a pen of iron, in dreadful characters upon the tablet of the univerſe, the barbarity and degradation of mankind!

Such would be the exclamation of the Philoſopher, who, drawn from the obſcurity of ſolitude, ſhould peruſe for the firſt time the hiſtory of nations; and, ſuch, alas! is the ſorrowful voice of Truth:—but the voice of truth is unavailing; the policy of mankind has eſtabliſhed the neceſſity of wars, and to that policy we muſt ſubmit.

There appear to me to be but two motives which can urge to war, and theſe are policy and juſtice; the wars which originate in the former of theſe are uſually offenſive, either directly or indirectly; thoſe which ariſe out of the latter, are, upon a ſimilarity of principle, uſually defenſive.

Among the wars of policy, thoſe muſt be numbered which have been entered into for the purpoſe of acquiring dominion, wealth, or glory; or of propagating certain opinions, or of overthrowing others, or of changing an obnoxious form of government: among the wars of juſtice,

thoſe for the purpoſe of regaining loſt poſſeſſions, or of revenge for ſome real or ſuppoſed inſult, or of defending our country and our opinions againſt unjuſt attack.

Now, according to the repreſentations of thoſe who profeſs to be the defenders of the preſent war, it is a war of defence, becauſe they aver that the French nation, having broached ideas of government contrary to every principle of ſubordination and truth, were determined to tranſplant their doctrines into this country; and that, in order to effect this, they proceeded, under ſeveral falſe pretences, to make a declaration of war againſt us and our allies; that thus driven to hoſtilities, we were compelled to take up arms, and that both juſtice and policy authorize us to continue the war till we can make a ſure and eſtabliſhed peace.

Let us then, my Countrymen, proceed to diſcuſs the truth of this repreſentation with that cool yet determined ſpirit, which becomes men intereſted in the cauſe of freedom; let us ſee how far this war is juſt and politic on the part of ourſelves and our allies.

And that this may be done the more clearly, I ſhall in the firſt place take a review of the conduct of the continental powers previous to the avowal of hoſtilities, of the conduct of the French court, and of the conduct of the Engliſh Cabinet up to the declaration of war upon the part of the French nation; from which I will pledge myſelf to prove to you, in the moſt plain and unequivocal terms, that there has been a ſecret, a ſettled, and a continued deſign to overthrow that nation; and to caſt the odium of aggreſſion upon them, by compelling them to make the firſt declaration of hoſtilities. I ſhall then proceed to aſcertain the particular object of our fear, and to conſider whether we have had any ground for fear at all: and thence draw the obvious conclu-

cluſions as to the *juſtice* of the war on the part of the Britiſh government and its allies.

For, I muſt lay it down as an axiom, that if there be any defection of principle on the part of our allies, the reproach of that defection is juſtly incurred by us, in proportion as we have acceded to their plans and adopted their conduct; nor does it matter in point of exculpation, at what period of time we united with them in thoſe plans or ſupported them in that conduct.

In the ſecond place, I ſhall enquire into the *policy* of the war; whether as it relates to the nature of its object; or to the extent of our reſources; or of thoſe of the enemy; or the proſpect of ſucceſs; or to the conſequences of diſappointment; or the preſent ſtate of affairs: and in the courſe of this inveſtigation, I truſt you will ſee ſufficient reaſons why terms of peace ought immediately to be offered to the French nation.

Various circumſtances in the politics of the Continental Courts had occurred to engage the attention of Europe, when the French nation, oppreſſed by the power and irritated by the caprice and profuſion of its Monarchs, determined to break the chain by which it had ſo long been debaſed, and at length compelled the King to aſſemble the States General of the realm.

Fraught with internal patriotiſm, and charged with the inſtructions of their conſtituents, the Deputies were determined to procure for themſelves and for their injured country liberty and equal laws, and to protect the public welfare from the machinations of a powerful and deſigning Court.

From that moment the eye of Europe was turned upon them; but it was not a friendly eye; it carefully watched their motions, but it watched them with a malignant de-

ſign. The Court of France too ſaw and dreaded the intentions of this novel aſſembly, and directed againſt them every power of art and force which had for ſo many centuries before been employed with ſucceſs.

What! did not the religious, the enlightened, the political Sovereigns of Europe afford this ſtruggling nation one ſigh of regret or one ſentiment of kindneſs in the unequal conflict? No! Did not the King of France and his Miniſters perceive the reaſonableneſs of the national requeſt? Did they not embrace the happy moment which enabled them to preſent a great and ſuffering people with their freedom? No! it was amidſt the tremendous gloom of foreign ſilence, and the deſigns of internal fraud, that the delegates of the people declared themſelves a permanent and national aſſembly.

To what various and horrible calamities this unwillingneſs to ingenuity on the part of the Court expoſed France, the various accounts of the revolution in that country plainly declare; and they abound alſo with inſtances of the early and ſecret combination of the ſurrounding Powers againſt it, in defiance of the moſt plauſible and unequivocal profeſſions.

It has been the language of your Government, and of its Allies, that, had the French people been ſatisfied with thoſe modifications of their Government which formed what has been called the Conſtitution of 1789, they might have preſerved the friendſhip of Europe, and that Conſtitution would have met with its acknowledgment and ſupport.

This declaration has the appearance of great fairneſs and moderation; and, if it be founded in ſincerity, is certainly calculated to remove the charge of aggreſſion and injuſtice from

from themſelves to the French: let it then ſtand the teſt of an enquiry into their conduct at the time, and into their ſubſequent proceedings.

In conſequence of a rumour in Paris, that the Court of London, intending to take advantage of the agitations in France, had ſent out orders to their fleets both in the Eaſt and Weſt Indies to attack Pondicherry and Domingo; the Duke of Dorſet, who was at that time Ambaſſador to the Court of France, wrote to the Count de Montmorin, diſclaiming the truth of this report, and affirming that his Court, ſo far from having any hoſtile intentions againſt France, had actually refuſed to concur in a plot which had been formed and preſented to it for ſeizing the port of Breſt.

So early then as the beginning of June 1789 a plot was certainly formed for ſeizing the port of Breſt, by perſons who had art or importance enough to have it made known to the Britiſh Cabinet! Who were theſe perſons? were they the agents of the French Court, or of Foreign Powers, or of both? it matters not; the plot was acknowledged by the Britiſh Miniſter, and he averred its rejection; but the honour or the policy of a Court would not permit the expoſure of names; and I muſt here remark to you, that, although the affair was of conſequence enough to occaſion the arreſt of ſeveral noble perſons, that dark and ſullen ſilence which had ſo long reigned, was not broken in any one Court, by the involuntary diſclamation of ſo nefarious an attempt, which would have burſt from the boſom of genuine honour and conſcious truth.

Surrounded by ſuſpicion, by poverty, and famine, the national aſſembly continued their labours, and at length preſented to the King the well-known decrees of the 4th

of

of Auguſt: let me intreat you to conſider how theſe decrees were received; were they received with that chearful freedom, with that friendly openneſs, which indicate the concurrence of the heart, while they do not rob the judgment of its freedom? at a time which demanded at once the moſt expeditious and the moſt explicit conduct, at a time when the people were anxiouſly waiting for the Royal ſanction of thoſe decrees which they fancied were to give them freedom, there was a frigid, a ſuſpicious, an unneceſſary delay; the decrees were not ſanctioned by the King till the 20th of September.

Conſiſtently with ſo ſtrange and diſingenuous a conduct, reports were induſtriouſly ſpread among the populace, forcibly repreſenting to them the enſlaved ſituation of their Sovereign; and the fooliſh boaſt of ſome of the ſycophants of the Court, that a very few days would reſtore things to their antient order, plainly demonſtrated the diſſatisfaction and the inimical views of the nobility.

On the 1ſt of October following, a great entertainment was given at Verſailles, to the Gardes du Corps: the deſign of this entertainment was too palpable to be doubted a moment; the manner in which the Royal Family appeared at the banquet, the conduct of the ſoldiers, who, while the Queen paſſed with the Dauphin in her arms, drew their ſwords and drank the Royal health; the rejection of the national toaſts, the diſtribution of the white cockade by the ladies of the Court; the playing the air of "O Richard! O my King!" were indubitable evidences of the purpoſe for which the feaſt was prepared, and were calculated to produce the moſt violent effects.

For, I muſt remind you, that, however trivial ſuch circumſtances may appear to you, whoſe ſlumbers are not diſturbed

diſturbed by the clamors of a mob, by the alarm of a tocſin, by the firing of guns; whoſe paſſions are not agitated at the ſight of a white, a black, or a tri-coloured cockade; they were no doubt looked upon by thoſe who employed them, as the means of producing concuſſions that might ſhake the empire; they were engines calculated to aſſiſt in the overthrow of the new Conſtitution; it was by the aid of the ſoldiery that *that* Conſtitution had been formed, and by theſe means the ſoldiery were expected to be influenced.

The agitation which the preſſure of famine will naturally produce in a metropolis like Paris, was ſoon after made the pretext for ordering a number of troops into the vicinity of that capital; the character of this proceeding was completely marked by two circumſtances; theſe troops were not choſen from among the National Guard, but were chiefly, if not wholly, compoſed of Foreigners; and a number, more than ſufficient to have kept the whole city in awe, were actually ſtationed round the Hall of the States General itſelf.

On the part of the Court, ſituated as it then was, what could be more indecent than ſuch proceedings? and to men who were ſtruggling againſt an antient and powerful ſyſtem, what could be more alarming? A remonſtrance, which ſhewed the ſenſe of the Aſſembly, was, on the 10th July, preſented to the King, beſeeching him to remove thoſe troops, and urged reaſons for this requeſt at once the moſt forcible and flattering to Louis.

What was the anſwer to this remonſtrance? Was it calculated to favor or ſtrengthen the new ſyſtem? was it formed to excite the gratitude of the people, or to quiet the apprehenſions of the Aſſembly? Alas! at that important

portant moment, ſalutary co-operation was either neglected or refuſed. The anſwer diſclaimed every intention of interrupting the freedom of debate; but at the ſame time added, that if the Aſſembly liked not the preſence of the troops, it might be removed to Soiſſons. Can there be two opinions of the meaning of ſuch an anſwer? If any thing were wanting to decide a wavering opinion, let me intreat you to contemplate the diſmiſſion of M. Necker at this time, the immediate promotion of Marſhal Broglio, M. Foulon, and others to the Miniſtry, whoſe characters and whoſe principles were odious to the people; Paris beſieged, as it were, with 50,000 men; and the dark and myſterious reſerve of the Court, on the repreſentations of the Aſſembly.

It has been obſerved, that the error originated with the Aſſembly, who manifeſted an unwarrantable diſtruſt of the Executive Power. You will judge from what I have ſtated, and from what I have yet to ſtate, how far the Aſſembly was culpable in this reſpect. But granting the obſervation, you will be ready to aſk, was it not equally the duty and the policy of the Court to remove this diſtruſt? Had its intentions been equal to its profeſſions, would it not have ſhewn an anxiety to remove it? Was this anxiety manifeſted in any one inſtance of its conduct?

I omit a thouſand tranſactions which would, I think, eſtabliſh the duplicity, or rather the direct intention of the Court, if it wanted eſtabliſhing; becauſe I am unwilling to fatigue you with many relations, from which one concluſion only can be drawn, and becauſe I wiſh you now to behold the dawn of the inclinations of the Foreign Powers towards the Conſtitution of 1789.

In conſequence of the removal of the King from Verſailles to the metropolis, the party connected with the Court were evidently filled with the deepeſt regret, and great numbers of that party immediately prepared to leave the kingdom. To facilitate this purpoſe, they obtained paſſports upon various pretences, and haſtened to foreign countries. Why they fled will be ſeen by the reception they met with at the different Courts, and by the objects to which they applied their firſt exertions.

Having ſeen the ill ſucceſs of the ſecret endeavours of the Court of France to recover its loſt privileges, the ſurrounding Powers began to act a little more openly towards the latter end of the year 1790, and the beginning of 1791. Large bodies of troops advanced upon the borders of France, from Germany, from Spain, from Italy, and from Savoy. The caution of the Emperor Leopold, however, who ſeems to have been at the head of theſe armaments, is worthy of your remark; he appears to have been afraid of riſking too haſtily his reputation, and perhaps his power. He wrote to the Court of France, and proteſted his friendſhip towards it; but intimated at the ſame time, that the innovations of the 4th of Auguſt, with reſpect to the rights of the German Princes, which ſubverted the feudal inſtitutions, muſt be done away, and thoſe inſtitutions reſtored to their former footing.

I have obſerved to you, my Countrymen, that pleas for war have never been wanted by thoſe who have wiſhed to enter into the field, and that thoſe pleas formed generally a very ſlight covering of the real motives by which they were actuated. The obvious fallacy and weakneſs of this pretext muſt certainly claſs it, in the judgment of every diſcerning man, with the moſt abſurd and contemptible of

them, whether the concert which appeared thus early among the Foreign Powers, or the actual advancing of the large bodies of troops I have mentioned towards France, or the reiterated decrees of the moſt ample compenſation by the Aſſembly, be conſidered.

Could the moſt faſtidious judgment blame the exertions of the Aſſembly at ſuch a time, in defence of their Conſtitution and their Country? Is no ſuſpicion, are no fears to be entertained of the profeſſions of a man towards that nation upon whoſe frontiers his armies are increaſing?

Permit me now to call your attention to the ſtate of the emigrations at this time; ſo early as February, 1791, all the different branches of the Royal Family, except Monſieur and Madame, had deſerted the kingdom. Were theſe proceedings likely to ſettle the minds of the people, or ſtrengthen the Conſtitution? Were they calculated to produce a generous reliance upon the profeſſions of the King and his Miniſters? Or was the ſhutting up the gate of the Tuilleries againſt the Magiſtrates and the National Guard, upon their return from the riot at Vincennes; and which, as ſoon as it was opened, diſcovered in the apartments of the King a great number of armed men, who had been let in by the Gentlemen of the Bed-Chamber, likely to quell the riſing ſuſpicions? Alas! how dreadfully were they formed for the production of new ones.

At this time the emigrated Nobleſſe began to aſſemble on the borders of Alſace. The Prince de Condè had already reviewed the army, the collection of which had been the object of their exertions; the very uniform which they wore, and the motto, bore the moſt hoſtile appearance. The German Princes in general had given countenance and protection

protection to the fugitives, and every part of the frontiers wore the aſpect of commotion.

How congenial ſuch a conduct could poſſibly be with ſentiments favourable towards the Conſtitution of 1789, let the moſt moderate underſtanding decide. But as if conviction itſelf was to be ſtrengthened, we arrive at a circumſtance which eſtabliſhes, in the moſt decided manner, not only the inſincerity of the Court of France, of the Emigrants, and of the Foreign Powers towards the Conſtitution of 1789, but alſo the ſecret and intimate connection which doubtleſs ſubſiſted between them.

This awful and important event, was the well-known deſertion of the King and his Family. The event itſelf, and the attending circumſtances, plainly authorize the inferences I have juſt drawn. Conſider, I intreat you, the time at which it happened, when it was ſuppoſed his friends were in a capacity to receive and ſupport him, the ſecrecy and diſpatch with which it was conducted, the numerous emigrations which immediately preceded it, the almoſt miraculous diſappearance of the circulating ſpecie, the attempts of the Nonjuring Prieſts to inflame the public mind, and of the numerous emiſſaries who were notoriouſly employed to corrupt the integrity of the ſoldiery, the quarters towards which the flight of the Royal Family was directed; and conſider, above all, the character of the man to whoſe direction the affair was committed, M. Bouille, one of the moſt unprincipled that ever diſgraced human nature. Conſider, I ſay, all theſe circumſtances attentively, and then judge what degree of credit you ought to give to the favourble ſentiments which have been profeſſed towards the Conſtituent Aſſembly, and the Conſtitution which it framed.

I purpoſely omit to mention the various reports which prevailed at this time, and which were almoſt univerſally believed in France, of the intentions of the Confederated Powers to reduce the people to their former debaſement, becauſe the obvious inferences from a fact which no man has diſputed, are ſufficient for my purpoſe.

It was urged by the unfortunate and ill-adviſed Monarch, that he did not intend to quit the kingdom, but that he purpoſed to take up his reſidence at Montmedi, a fortified town of Luxemburgh, till peace and order were reſtored to his dominions; and this diſavowal of an intention to deſert his kingdom, has been believed and inſiſted upon by many. But, independently of the palpable abſurdity of the idea of reſtoring peace and order to his kingdom by flying from the capital; independently of the numerous conſiderations I have juſt now urged to you, there are two queſtions which you will be induced to aſk. If the King left Paris only until peace and order were reſtored to the kingdom, what did theſe terms, under all the circumſtances, imply; and by whoſe exertions were peace and order to be reſtored? Secondly, if the King's aſſertion be true, how how came it that Monſieur (after a ſolemn promiſe to the contrary) and Madame, who departed with his Majeſty from Paris, divided their route; and as they fortunately were not ſtopped in their courſe, abſolutely did leave the kingdom?

Yes, you would naturally aſk theſe queſtions, and at the ſame moment you would anſwer them: you would ſay to the firſt, the terms peace and order muſt mean the reſtitution of the former Government, ſince the juſt demands of the people for Liberty and a rational Conſtitution, had not long before been ſtigmatiſed as tumult and innovation. Had

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the King meant that peace and that order which were conſiſtent with the ſpirit of the decrees he had ſanctioned, would he have thus ſecretly and abruptly left the very men who had framed them, and with whom it was abſolutely neceſſary he ſhould act in concert? It is then eaſy to ſee by whoſe aid peace and order were to be reſtored; by whom but by the friends to whom he was haſtening? To the ſecond queſtion you would anſwer, the improbability that there ſhould be any eſſential difference between the deſigns of the King and his Brother, is ſo great, that in fact the queſtion reſolves itſelf. To have doubted your anſwers, would have been to inſult your underſtanding.

Previous to this tranſaction, neither the efforts of the factious, the oppoſition of the Court, or the emigrations of the Nobleſſe, had been able to alienate the affections of the people from their Sovereign. His perſon had hitherto continued to preſerve a magic influence over them; from this unhappy moment that influence was no more; all was darkneſs aud ſuſpicion; and from this womb of obſcurity and miſtruſt, ſprung that deſolating and bloody ſpirit which would have remained for ever in its congenial gloom, had the boſoms of the people been warmed to gratitude and confidence.

Does the real intention of the King want confirmation ſtill? Does the idea of the communication which I have mentioned to have ſecretly exiſted between the French Court, the Emigrants, and the Foreign Powers, require eſtabliſhing? Behold then the inſtantaneous conſequences of the King's flight. M. Cazales, and ſeveral other perſons of the ſame party, ſent in their reſignation; the levies of troops, in the name of the King, were begun; and not a few of the Officers of the late Royal Regiments uſed the

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moſt ſtrenuous exertions to ſeduce the ſoldiers from their allegiance to the new Conſtitution! But the King, by a letter to the National Aſſembly, formally diſavowed the levies of troops in his name—he did ſo—but if the diſavowal were ſincere, do you not perceive how fully the charge I have advanced of aggreſſion againſt your Government and its Allies, is thereby ſubſtantiated? If it were falſe, the concluſion is obvious.

Theſe accumulated inſtances of deſign and enmity, could not however ſubdue the moderate and placable diſpoſition of the Aſſembly; it ſtill appeared to be tenacious of the decree which had declared the perſon of the King to be inviolable; it was ſtill deſirous of conciliating even the Emigrants; and an Envoy, M. Dreveyrier, was ſent to the Prince de Condè, and the other Princes, for the expreſs purpoſe of inviting them to return into the friendſhip of their countrymen. Can you hear the event of that embaſſy without indignation? The Envoy was inſulted, and committed to a priſon!

After this, is it poſſible you can be amuſed with profeſſions of amity towards the Conſtitution of 1789, by men who were thus openly adverſe to its framers, and by thoſe who have ſecretly afforded them ſupport? Remember, thoſe profeſſions were not made till their vain attempts to overthrow it, had produced in the boſoms of the French, an inveterate hatred againſt the ambition and the perfidy of Courts.

Hitherto, ſurpriſing as it may ſeem, there had not been any one act committed by the French, but what was purely defenſive; and we find the Conſtituent Aſſembly, inſtead of ſeeking for enemies in other countries, had been labouring to prepare, what they eſteemed a palladium for the

the liberties of their own. Alas! they did not ſeem to be aware that this was the moſt certain mode of creating numberleſs enemies againſt themſelves and their devoted country.

The various decrees which had been paſſed relative to the Legiſlation, on the 4th of Auguſt, 1789, and at ſubſequent periods, were at length digeſted into a code of laws, and preſented to the King upon the 3d of September, 1791, and ſolemnly accepted by him upon the 15th, and on the 30th of the ſame month the National Aſſembly diſſolved itſelf.

## CHAP. II.

AMONGST the new aſſembly there were many men whoſe characters, ſituations and opinions were materially different from thoſe of ſome of the members of the Conſtituent Aſſembly; they were evidently more impreſſed with the neceſſity of a ſtrict watchfulneſs, both over the Court at home and their enemies abroad, and they were doubtleſs more inclined to the erection of a Republican form of Government than their predeceſſors had appeared to be: to comment upon theſe circumſtances, and many more, which formed a diſtinction between theſe bodies, is not my purpoſe; it will ſuffice for me to prove to you, that even with theſe men an offenſive war did not originate.

During the ſeſſion of the firſt aſſembly, it was well known that deſigns were entertained by the Emperor and the King of Pruſſia inimical to the new ſyſtem; but one of the moſt atrocious, one of the moſt flagitious, one of the moſt profligate compacts that were ever entered into againſt the exiſtence of Truth and Freedom by enlightened men, was

not

not known to them; at leaſt they were too ignorant of the particulars to be able to take that notice of it which became the dignity of ſuch a body.

The compact to which I allude is the league of Pilnitz; at the head of which were the Emperor of Germany, the King of Pruſſia, and the Empreſs of Ruſſia; the known object of which was the new-modelling of the Government of France. This intention is corroborated by the circular letter of the Emperor from Pavia of the 6th of July, 1791; and a paper to which I would call your recollection, entitled Partition Treaty between the Courts in concert, concluded and ſigned at Pavia in the month of July 1791, will in ſome meaſure unſeal the ſecret plot.

What! was the invaſion of France to be ſucceeded by a juſt, a fair, a well-modelled Government? Was a clear and decided liberty to be given to the French nation? let the anſwer be given by thoſe who have invaded and torn to pieces the unhappy kingdom of Poland—by thoſe who have immured the brave and unfortunate Fayette in a curſed dungeon—by thoſe who accepted the betrayed Deputies from the hands of a betrayer, whom they afterwards would not truſt—by thoſe who have deemed it honourable, or at leaſt politic, to form an alliance with ſuch degraded characters.

I bluſh indeed for the honour, for the integrity of your Government, when I mention the ſtrong report of its acceſſion to this nefarious league, and alſo of its ſigning the treaty of Pavia in March 1792: happy ſhould I be to diſcover the falſity of ſuch reports; but there has been too cloſe an agreement between them and our conduct ſince that period. The ſubſequent acceptance of the treaty of Pavia on the part of the Dutch, with a reſervation that the

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arrangement of the limits of partition ſhould be made agreeable to the ſentiments of the States General, has been alſo equally reported.

What ideas your Miniſter may entertain of provocation; what he may think proper to call aggreſſion, I know not; this I know, that if the inference which muſt be drawn from this ſingle fact, and which fixes upon his meaſures the charge of offence, be diſputed by ſubtlety, the common ſenſe of mankind will riſe up againſt it.

But it is ſuſpected, that the ſecret intentions of the Princes who were united in this league of Pilnitz were of a nature ſtill more ſhocking to every ſentiment of juſtice, and the impenetrable myſtery in which its particular conditions have been concealed, but too well warrant the ſuſpicion that it was not formed for the reſtoration of even the antient Government in France, but that the real object of it was the diſmemberment and partition of that unhappy country.

And indeed how little reaſon there can be to doubt of this, diſgraceful as the very idea is to human nature, we ſhall be ſadly convinced, if we conſider for a moment either the ſituation of France, or the hopes which that ſituation might naturally excite, or the time at which the league was formed, or the perſons who were concerned in it, or the preparations for hoſtilities which were then ſo formidable in their progreſs.

Whatever the fact may be, either as to the number of the confederates or the nature of their deſigns, the French were at length acquainted with the abſolute exiſtence of this formidable conſpiracy againſt their power and their freedom. Could they behold ſuch a conſpiracy unmoved? could they contemplate ſo formidable a union, of the Emperor, the King of Pruſſia, and the Empreſs, againſt them, and remain

the unſuſpecting children of credulity? Nothing but the moſt conſummate ignorance, both of the characters of thoſe Sovereigns and of the human heart, could generate a doubt; muſt they not rather be driven to the moſt deſperate exceſſes? muſt they not rather be urged on to the moſt furious revenge? muſt they not rather be impelled by all the rage with which ſuſpicion, hatred and deſpair can rend the human breaſt?

I own, I find it difficult to ſet bounds to my indignation, when I hear the French nation ſtigmatized as a race of miſcreants, by the very men who have themſelves thus dared to trample upon every right which heaven has given to mankind; when I hear that nation charged as the enemies of all eſtabliſhed order, by the open violators of every ſacred tie; when I behold the indecent triumph of an inſatiate and an ambitious band over an unhappy people, whom their open hoſtilities and ſecret intrigues have driven to diſtraction.

The Aſſembly ſaw the impending danger, which indeed became every day more apparent, yet their operations were reſtrained within the ſtricteſt idea of defence; they renewed their attention to the ſtate of the army on the frontiers; they ordered the Miniſter at War to render an account of the recruiting ſervice, proviſions, ammunition, and the various affairs of his department; and the hoſtile proclamations of the emigrant Princes rendering ſtill more vigorous meaſures neceſſary, they paſſed a decree which deprived Monſieur of his right of ſucceſſion to the regency, in caſe he did not return to the kingdom within the ſpace of two months.

And now mark the conduct of the united Powers! while the very man who was thus called home by his countrymen,

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and refuſed to obey the ſummons, was harboured and ſupported by them; while the Emigrants were ſuffered to enliſt men, and to iſſue proclamations in their dominions; while, in ſhort, the league of Pilnitz and the treaty of Pavia were remaining in full force, aſſurances were ſent to France from theſe Powers of the moſt friendly intentions towards the Conſtitution which the King had juſt accepted. The Elector of Mentz was the only potentate who had at that time the ingenuity to confeſs himſelf inimical to the new form of Government.

Does it require any uncommon powers of diſcrimination to perceive the reaſon of theſe amicable profeſſions? the ſcheme was not ripe for execution! the fatal communication between the enemies upon the borders and the foe within had not yet broken the unanimous ſpirit of the nation; the deſigning Leopold perceived and feared their unanimity.

Jealous of her foreign and domeſtic enemies, this diſtracted country knew not which way to turn; ſhe beheld every movement with an eye of ſuſpicion; ſhe feared an attack from every hand: had ſhe at that moment declared war againſt the world, every honeſt heart, while it deplored the deed, would have known how to pardon it.

The decree, therefore, of the 9th of November, 1791, was, I contend, an indiſpenſible meaſure; it was ſtrong, but it was alſo temperate; its particulars are doubtleſs known to moſt of you; it was immediately directed againſt the Emigrants, and was followed by another, which ordered the inſtant filling up the vacancies in the army, and the exertion of the various means for a defence which the circumſtances of the times had rendered ſo needful.

Have I not already eſtabliſhed my charge of aggreſſion in this war againſt the Powers who firſt engaged in it againſt France? yet how many inſtances of duplicity, how many evidences of enmity on their part, have I omitted to produce, and ſo many remain from the period at which we are now arrived to that in which your Government openly engaged in the war, that were I to bring them before you particularly, I fear your patience would be doubly exhauſted.

Were I to dwell upon the refuſal of the Royal aſſent to the decree of the 9th of November againſt the Emigrants, and to the decree of the 18th of the ſame month againſt the nonjuring Clergy; upon the affair with the Elector of Treves; upon the diſcovery of the plan formed by the Emperor at Mantua in March 1791, for the re-eſtabliſhment of deſpotiſm in France; upon the ſatisfaction which ſeveral of the German Princes expreſſed with the compenſation offered to them by the Aſſembly; upon the continued duplicity of the Emperor at the beginning of the year 1792; upon the letter from Prince Kaunitz to the Imperial Charge des Affaires at Paris, dated February 17th; and upon the various political movements till the death of the Emperor, into what a labyrinth of diſſimulation and injuſtice ſhould I not lead you.

Rouſed at length by the intemperate conduct of the Combined Powers, of which the avowal of the ſucceſſor of Leopold to adhere to the league of Pilnitz, the reply of the Imperial Court to the letter of the King, the terms which were mentioned by that Court as the only ground upon which peace could be granted to the French, are memorable and decided inſtances: the Legiſlature of France, in conſequence of the propoſal of the King, declared war againſt

againſt the King of Hungary and Bohemia on the 20th of April, 1792.

Yet although the numerous provocations which the French have received are well known, although the duplicity of the aſſailing powers is well eſtabliſhed, although the length of time which elapſed under the inſtigation of open hoſtility and ſecret artifice has been fully aſcertained, there have not been wanting men, even among the friends of rational liberty, who have charged the French with inconſiſtence, and with forgetfulneſs of former profeſſions, in thus declaring war; be you, my countrymen, the judges between them.

How far it was conſiſtent with policy, it is not my buſineſs to enquire; at the ſame time I am ready to confeſs, that the crooked ideas of ſtateſmen have ſo long confounded policy with juſtice, that when we would form our judgment of a public meaſure, we are amazed to find what mighty prejudices an eſtabliſhed uſage has engendered in our minds.

Were there then no errors, were there no crimes among this devoted people? Alas! how many errors, how many crimes have ſtained the page of their important hiſtory! but what have theſe to do with the queſtion of aggreſſion? do we preſume to puniſh? into the hands of what nation hath the Almighty put the rod of chaſtiſement? Let that nation whoſe purity and truth have made it the favourite of Heaven ſtand forth!—"And he ſaid unto them, let him "who is blameleſs among you caſt the firſt ſtone; and not "one of them uttered a word!"

Happy indeed would it have been for you, my countrymen, for the French nation, and for Europe, had the ſame compunction ſeized the royal champion of peace and order

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which this ſublime and pathetic admonition of our Saviour produced in the accuſers of the woman taken in adultery. How fooliſh, how uſeleſs is the wiſh! Has compunction, has remorſe ever overcome the mighty efforts of ambition?

But while you lament the exceſſes into which this ill-fated nation has been plunged, you will do well to ſuffer the odium to reſt upon the proper head. Can you ſeriouſly believe, that to oppoſe the vices and to cheriſh the virtues of the French people, was the beneficent intention of the powers which leagued againſt them? Do you really think, that to eſtabliſh the principles and the practice of juſtice, to give a rational freedom and a well-regulated Government to a diſtracted nation, were the motives which influenced the Emperor of Germany, the Empreſs of Ruſſia, and the King of Pruſſia?

But as if theſe Princes were deſirous to ſave the world the trouble of ſeeking for an opinion of their motives, the Proclamation of the Emperor and the King, and the Manifeſto of the Duke of Brunſwick, were iſſued from Coblentz, on the 25th July, 1792. To the intemperance of the one, and the ſanguinary menaces of the other, you are no ſtrangers. Let me aſk you then, if theſe were calculated to ſooth the irritated minds of the French, to quell their fears, to allay their jealouſies? Did they breathe the ſpirit which ever will influence the defender of liberty, the reſtorer of order, the foe of anarchy? Did they contain the language of men whoſe profeſſions of amity had been ſincere? Let the ſpirit which it arouſed in the people, and which produced the depoſition of the King, anſwer.

And now, my countrymen, from the facts I have ſtated to you, what is the inference you draw? Do the amicable profeſſions of the Foreign Powers towards the Conſtitution

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of 1789, appear to have been made in ſincerity? Do you think they have been actuated to the war by the love of truth and juſtice? Has the Court of France eſtabliſhed its claim to a fair and diſintereſted character? Do you conſider the French as an offended or an offending people? In ſhort, do you conceive the war to be, what your Allies and your Miniſter have conſtantly affirmed it to be, a juſt and a neceſſary war?

Let me beſeech you not to ſuffer your feelings to interfere with your judgment upon this occaſion. You may pity the follies, you may execrate the barbarities which have diſtreſſed the interior of France; but I muſt repeat to you, theſe have nothing to do with the grand queſtion, of the juſtice or the neceſſity of the war.

But as I am now haſtening to review the part *we* have been induced to act in this calamitous conteſt, I ſhall have an opportunity of more fully examining the objections which have been made to any pacific movements on our ſide; and if I can ſhew you that by our conduct we have not in any one inſtance proved ourſelves friendly to the Conſtitution of 1789; but that, on the contrary, we entered into the views of the Emperor and the King againſt the French; and that we concealed thoſe views no longer than while intereſt and policy induced us to conceal them; you will eaſily perceive that we have, in every ſenſe of the words, made ourſelves direct participators in all the criminality with which I have charged thoſe views; and many arguments will not then, I truſt, be neceſſary to prove to you the obligation we are under of propoſing to an inſulted and an injured nation, conditions of peace.

You will, I hope, hear me with patience; the alternative of war or peace is always an important one, and every well

well meant diſcuſſion of its utility or juſtice, deſerves the favourable ear of that public whoſe welfare is always the real or the pretended object of it.

## CHAP. III.

I HAVE laid it down as a principle, the truth of which you muſt enquire for yourſelves, that if the plans of our Allies have been defective in any good or neceſſary qualities, we are liable to the cenſure due to ſuch a defection, in proportion as we have adopted thoſe plans, and that the period at which we adopted them could not certainly have any weight in point of exculpation.

To the deciſion of this principle I ſhall refer for an equitable judgment of the facts which may preſent themſelves; ſince, if they appear to have a connection with thoſe I have already ſtated to you, as ſupporting or corroborating facts, the time at which they happened will be of ſmall importance.

The plain declaration which I have not heſitated to deliver of my ſentiments, will not incur me the diſapprobation of any man whoſe good opinion and confidence I need be ſolicitous to obtain; they who do not wilfully miſunderſtand me, will eaſily diſcern that thoſe ſentiments are the conſequence of a juſt regard for the honor and welfare of my country.

Profeſſions are, therefore, unneceſſary; yet there is a very unhappy faſhion at preſent, of ſuſpecting every man who does not make very violent profeſſions; and a deluſion ſtill more unhappy, which covers every man who is frank enough to confeſs his diſapprobation of certain meaſures of the

the Government, with all the obloquy and reproach that ought to cover him alone, who is an enemy to the welfare or the exiſtence of his country.

The progreſs of ſuch a deluſion is indeed a very lamentable proof of corruption on the one hand, and of a puerile credulity on the other; it is a branch of that fatal error at which I hinted in the beginning of this addreſs, and into which too many Stateſmen fall. Riſe ſuperior, I beſeech you, to ſo degrading a weakneſs; learn to diſtinguiſh the patriot from the demagogue, and do not, by blending the good intentions of the one with the reſtleſs deſigns of the other, commit an injuſtice which you cannot eaſily repair, and which will ever reflect diſhonor upon your character.

Although it was not until the firſt of February, 1793, that the decree was paſſed in the National Convention, which declared the French Republic at war with Great Britain and Holland, we may look back to the meeting of the Engliſh Parliament in January, 1790, for very clear indications of the ſentiments of your Court upon the previous tranſactions in France: and from that time to the open commencement of hoſtilities, I will produce a conduct which manifeſted one even and unaltered deſign, on our part, to ſeize the firſt politic pretext for engaging in a war with France.

The Parliament met upon the 21ſt of January, 1790, and Lord Valletort moved the addreſs to the King; in the courſe of his ſpeech that Nobleman mentioned the ſtate of France; he compared it with that of this country, and did not heſitate to pronounce it a ſtate of anarchy and licentiouſneſs. He declared the Revolution in that kingdom to

be one of the moſt ſhocking events which had been recorded in its annals.

What! was this the Conſtitution of 1789, which we have ſince affected to approve, that was thus impolitically and unfairly ſtigmatized as fatal and deſtructive in its influences? It was that Conſtitution which even then was in its infancy, and from which, by every ſincere lover of truth and freedom, the moſt happy conſequences were augured. This weak aſperſion was however applauded; and we ſhall find, by the event, that it was too ſtrongly indicative of the real opinions of the Miniſter.

Nor were the doctrines which Mr. Burke delivered in a debate which took place very ſoon after, upon the army eſtimates, calculated to raiſe more favourable ideas of the labors of the Conſtituent Aſſembly: he charged them with atrocious perfidy, with attempting to deſtroy ſyſtematically every power of authority, civil and religious, with the exceſſes of an unprincipled, plundering, ferocious, bloody and tyrannical Democracy; he charged them with the fact of having deſtroyed a good Conſtitution, and of having made their way through the deſtruction of their country to a bad one.

Is it poſſible to ſuppoſe, that language like this could paſs unnoticed in France; or, that being noticed, it could conciliate or animate to friendſhip, with the additional recommendation of the applauſe of Mr. Pitt? Can any man doubt Mr. Pitt's real ſentiments of the Conſtitution of 1789, who remembers that he thanked Mr. Burke for this indication of his zeal for the welfare of his country, although the Miniſter preſerved the moſt profound and cautious ſilence upon the ſubject of the Revolution itſelf?

Circumſtances

Circumſtances like theſe are unimportant in the eſtimation of every man who accuſtoms himſelf to view only the ſurface of events; but to the thinking man, their connection with their conſequences, however remote, appears; and I will venture to affirm, that the uniform ſilence of Mr. Pitt upon a ſubject of ſuch importance, portended more certainly inimical deſigns againſt the French Conſtitution, than the moſt pointed reprobation could have done; and that a man of the latter deſcription, would eaſily perceive an unity of intention between the dark and ſecret reſerve of 1790, the acceſſion to the Treaty of Pavia in 1792, and the conduct of the Britiſh Cabinet in 1793; even if every other link of this extended chain were hidden from his obſervation.

The French have been reproached with an unreaſonable ſpirit of diſtruſt; but the reproach is ill-timed and unwiſe. That people are naturally quick and diſcerning, and this is a diſpoſition which, if not carefully guarded, will naturally produce that ſpirit. They were in a ſituation alſo that furniſhed more than common cauſe for ſuſpicion, and the myſterious taciturnity of the Miniſter upon this occaſion, muſt doubtleſs have added greatly to their jealouſy. But the taſk I propoſe to myſelf in this addreſs to you, is the eſtabliſhment of the injuſtice and the impolicy of the war, and not the exculpation of the French people from the numerous charges which have been made againſt them, relating to their own internal miſconduct.

I proceed therefore to obſerve, that there are other links which ſtart here and there to the ſight, and which indubitably manifeſt to a penetrating obſerver, one even, connected and certain chain of deſign, on our part, againſt the Conſtitution of France, from the moment of the firſt

appearance of the Revolution in that country, to the preſent hour: nor is it wonderful if theſe are few, ſince it has been the buſineſs of a man of uncommon powers, to hide that chain wholly from the public view.

That the Adminiſtration of this country regarded with no favourable eye the changes which had taken place in the Government of France, is further manifeſt from the manner in which Mr. Pitt oppoſed the repeal of the Teſt Laws, upon its being brought a third time before the Houſe of Commons, by Mr. Fox, in March, 1790. Upon the two former motions for this repeal, Mr. Pitt had behaved with ſo much moderation, that ſome of the unwary among the Diſſenters had almoſt been perſuaded to think him their friend: he now declared his diſlike of the bill in terms little ſhort of violence; and declared it was poſſible the Diſſenters might uſe the liberty for which they ſought, againſt the welfare of their country.

Whence this ſudden alteration? The ſource is obvious. The Diſſenters, who had always ſhewn themſelves the firm and determined friends of the Houſe of Hanover, were alſo the firm and determined enemies of tyranny; they had therefore honeſtly expreſſed their joy at its recent overthrow in France; they became immediately a ſuſpected body of men, and were declared unworthy of the favor of the Legiſlature.

Is not this forming a ſtriking contraſt between the French Conſtitution of 1789 and the Government of England? Is it not ſaying, in the plaineſt terms, that the man who had expreſſed his approbation of that Conſtitution was an unſafe ſubject? And could the Miniſter, who thought thus, be eaſy at the eſtabliſhment of a power which he muſt behold with the mingled emotions of fear and hatred, as injurious

to

to the ſafety of his country? yet this is the Conſtitution of which it has been ſaid the French ought never to have departed from it. This is the Conſtitution which has been acknowledged by the ſervants of this very Adminiſtration.

If there could yet exiſt any doubt of the reaſon of this ſevere inuendo againſt the Diſſenters, it would be removed by the adjurations of Mr. Burke, who followed the Miniſter; that the events which had recently happened in France might be ſuffered to awaken the zeal of the Houſe, in defence of the church againſt its preſent danger. The zeal of the Houſe was accordingly awakened, and the majority againſt the repeal of the act, which in the former ſeſſion had been only 20, was now increaſed to 189 voices.

The affair of Nootka Sound, which occaſioned a meſſage to the Houſe on the 5th of May, 1790, ſtands as a ſimple event apparently unconnected with the preſent ſubject of diſcuſſion. I have mentioned it, however, to ſhew you the eaſe with which an ingenious politician can modify or adapt his arguments to any particular occaſion. Mr. Grey, in a ſpeech upon this buſineſs, maintained the reality and importance of the national honor. Mr. Burke upon this occaſion, did not treat the national honor with his wonted reverence; and added this memorable axiom: "as we ought never to "go to war for a profitable wrong, ſo we ought never to go "to war for an unprofitable right." This is the ſentiment of a man who was at that very moment violently contending for a war with France; which, if his underſtanding had not been perverted by prejudice or policy, he would ſoon have diſcovered to be for an unprofitable wrong.

Upon this occaſion too, a warm deſire of friendſhip with England was expreſſed in a report which was given in to the National Aſſembly, upon a Memorial of the Spaniſh Court.

Court. Is not ſome acknowledgment of theſe peaceful ſentiments due to the Aſſembly which delivered them, at the very moment when their labors and deliberations were vilified and miſrepreſented in the Engliſh Houſe of Commons, by the friends and adherents of the Premier? But I have another reaſon for mentioning this buſineſs, which I will ſhew you by and bye.

I ſhall now mention the publication of Mr. Burke's Book, or rather the credit which the doctrines it contained procured for him with Adminiſtration, as another plain proof of the unfriendly inclinations of the Britiſh Miniſtry towards the principles of the French Revolution.

Whether the character of the author, or the violent tendency of the work be conſidered, it muſt ſurely afford ground of ſomething more than ſuſpicion, that the continued ſilence of the Miniſter was not the effect of a pure and decided neutrality, when it is remembered, that the expreſſions of implacable animoſity againſt the authors of the Revolution, the exhortations to the moſt cruel ſyſtem of war againſt the French nation, and the indiſcriminating abuſe againſt thoſe who had ventured to approve the new ſyſtem, with which that work abounds, were regarded as the laudable efforts of the defender of eſtabliſhed cuſtoms, againſt the inroads of a dangerous opinion and determined innovators. Is this diſputed? Let the cordiality which thenceforth grew more and more warm between Mr. Burke and Adminiſtration, decide the diſpute.

Could this cordiality with the determined and rancorous enemy of the Conſtitution of 1789, be converted into a proof of the Miniſter's ſincerity in his neutrality towards the founders of it? It was a proof of its actual fallacy; and a falſe neutrality is not, I believe, very far removed from

from hoſtile intention: conſult your common ſenſe in this matter; will that man, who has not in his boſom ſome concealed hatred or jealouſy againſt another, favour the calumniator of his enemy? he will not; and I have never yet found that a ſtateſman has been hearty in his profeſſions of neutrality, towards that power againſt which he entertained both jealouſy and hatred.

I ſaid I had a reaſon for bringing to your recollection the diſpute with Spain, concerning Nootka Sound; I have alſo a reaſon for mentioning to you the threatened conteſt with Ruſſia, concerning Oczakow, for which Mr. Pitt repreſented the neceſſity of an immediate augmentation of the navy; theſe reaſons I will now explain to you.

As far as I have proceeded with my review of facts at home, I have not found any thing to ſhake my conviction, that the politics of your Miniſter have ever been adverſe to the new political exiſtence of France, and that it has been his uniform intention to attempt its overthrow, whenever he could ſafely attempt it; and theſe two facts I have introduced to you as corroborating facts, and conſequently for the purpoſe of eſtabliſhing a ſimilar conviction in your boſoms.

If then Mr. Pitt actually meditated future oppoſition to France, did he not gain ſomething towards that object in the plauſible eſtabliſhment of taxes for four years, to pay the intereſt of the money granted for the equipment of the armament againſt Spain, and in the loan of £.500,000, ſo long as a balance to that amount of unclaimed dividends ſhould appear to remain in the hands of the Caſhier of the Bank? Have theſe taxes ever been repealed, or has any part of that ſum ever been repaid?

Be

Be this, however, as it may, who does not ſee, in this latter inſtance, the intimacy between the Courts of London and Berlin? who does not perceive in that union an imperious and reſtleſs ſpirit, which was not very likely to have Oczakow alone for its object; a ſpirit which has indeed excited a war that has deluged Europe with blood?

Had the pretended objects of theſe armaments, in fact, poſſeſſed the importance which was aſcribed to them, or had it indeed been ſeriouſly Mr. Pitt's intention to have revenged the affront he affirmed this country to have received from Spain, or to have kept Oczakow from the Empreſs, would he have been ſo eaſily diverted as he was from the execution of his project? I believe there are few among you who have witneſſed the ſucceſs with which he has carried every meaſure through the Houſe of Commons that he was determined to carry, will ſuppoſe this to have been the caſe. Did England and Pruſſia conſolidate their friendſhip only to procure Oczakow for the Turks?

The fact was, the Cabinet of England kept a ſecret and a watchful eye over the progreſs of the French nation; they ſaw it ſurrounded on every ſide by threatening Powers, and diſtracted by internal commotions; they ſaw too the ſatisfaction with which you witneſſed the emerſion of that wretched country from a vile and debaſing ſlavery; they feared, ah fooliſh fear! that if the opinions which had produced ſuch a change in France ſhould be adopted by you, a ſimilar change would be produced here: they therefore waited for a favourable opportunity to commence a war, in which, ſupported as they were by numerous alliances, it was not doubted but that country would fall for ever

But, however anxious your Miniſter and his friends might be for the depreſſion of this innovating race, there

was

was yet no pretext for war; nay, the French, regardleſs of the indecent terms in which their meaſures had been abuſed among you, were continually expreſſing their wiſh that the antient enmity between the nations might be no more. To have propoſed war at ſuch a time would, doubtleſs, have excited the public reprobation. What was to be done? You were condemned to be the ſilent ſpectators of thoſe hoſtile preparations and ſecret intrigues, by which the French might at length be driven to outrage and exceſs, that might not only be repreſented as a juſtification of war, but which might alſo make even you their enemies.

The Proclamation againſt ſeditious writings and illegal correſpondencies, which was preſented to the Houſe upon the 5th of May, 1792, was alſo clearly expreſſive of an increaſing fear and abhorrence againſt French principles: upon what real or pretended grounds of ſuſpicion that meaſure was founded, or what have been the effects it hath produced in this country, it is no part of my preſent buſineſs to enquire; let every man inform himſelf of them who would learn how opinion is to be repreſſed by the arm of power: it will be ſufficient for me to ſhew that a rankling animoſity exiſted in the breaſt of the Miniſter againſt the very firſt principles of the Revolution, and that the execrated proceedings of the French againſt their unfortunate King were only ſeized upon as affording the opportunity of commencing open hoſtilities, without the riſk of public odium.

How many circumſtances offer themſelves, as it were, to corroborate this idea! about this time it appears that a confidential letter was received by his Majeſty from the King of France, expreſſive in the warmeſt terms of amity and affection. Situated as Louis then was, ſuch a letter

could not but be conſidered as demonſtrative of the national ſentiment. It was therefore, no doubt, eagerly embraced as the happy occaſion of a laſting union; it was ſurely eſteemed by the Britiſh Cabinet as the welcome harbinger of continued peace with a Monarch, over whoſe aſhes it has ſince ſhed ſo many tears, and an anſwer inſtantly returned which might ſuit with ſuch pathetic and congenial ſentiments. Alas! the anſwer was at once frigid and evaſive; England could not mediate unleſs her attempts were approved by *all* the contending parties. No! ſhe had loſt the power of a forced mediation, doubtleſs, ſince her laſt exertions of that nature in the affair of Oczakow! Could the French Miniſters be longer blind to the purpoſes of England? impoſſible! from that moment her affected neutrality became ſuſpicious in their ſight.

Let me beſeech you, my countrymen, to impreſs this circumſtance upon your minds; contraſt it with thoſe profeſſions of peace which have ſo often flowed from the lips of your Miniſter; contraſt it with the aſſertions that have ſo frequently been made, that the war was inevitable on our part, and then give to thoſe profeſſions and to thoſe aſſertions that degree of credit of which you may judge them worthy.

## CHAP. IV.

AT length the open and the ſecret movements of our Allies produced the long expected effect. The Duke of Brunſwick, upon the 25th of July, 1792, iſſued his Manifeſto from Coblentz, and, at the head of 80,000 men, entered France. The popular fury knew no bounds: exaſperated

exaſperated by the menaces, and alarmed even to deſpair at the immenſe force of the Duke, they were driven to the deſperate meaſure of depoſing their King, and the 10th of Auguſt was the unfortunate day that furniſhed the opportunity of commencing an open rupture, and the events which followed that awful movement were too rapid and too atrocious to permit the judgment at that moment coolly to retrace their real and hidden cauſes: aſtoniſhment and horror were the only prevailing ſenſations, and it was repreſented and believed to be unworthy of a virtuous and a loyal people to preſerve any longer amity with wretches who had dared to drag their Monarch from his throne.

Your Ambaſſador Lord Gower was, in conſequence of this tranſaction, recalled from Paris, and the reaſon alledged was, that the power of the King being done away, the longer reſidence of an Ambaſſador was ridiculous.

The weakneſs and folly of this excuſe muſt be, if poſſible, more diſguſting to an enlightened underſtanding than the impolicy of the meaſure itſelf: how palpably does it expoſe the nature of an Embaſſy, and the functions of an Ambaſſador. Do you annually pay them ſo many thouſands in the ſupport of ſplendid and unmeaning viſits to the Monarchs of Europe? Are the people of no conſequence in theſe coſtly errands? but I leave this to your reflection.

Profligate as the ruling party in France was ſaid to be, and loſt to every idea of policy, humanity and juſtice, what was their conduct upon this occaſion? Did they not break out into the moſt wild and bitter reproaches? Did they not inſtantly denounce war and deſtruction? Did not the moſt ferocious barbarity of reſentment mark their conduct? Will it be believed, that they who have been as much deſpiſed for their imbecillity as politicians, as they have

been deteſted for their impiety as men, ſhould even now manifeſt a ſpirit of moderation, and a deſire of peace? M. Chauvelin remained in London as their Ambaſſador, although his powers were contemptuouſly unacknowledged by the Britiſh Miniſtry.

A Memorial was preſented by this Ambaſſador on the 17th of December, 1792, to Lord Grenville, expreſſive of the doubts the French nation entertained of the intentions of the Court of England, and demanding a candid explanation of thoſe intentions: rejecting the falſe interpretation which it affirmed had been put upon the famous decree of the 19th of November, which offered aſſiſtance to every ſtate that was deſirous of recovering its liberty; and declaring, in the moſt ſolemn language, that the French nation would not act againſt Holland, ſo long as the States General adhered to the principles of her profeſſed neutrality, and intimating that the opening of the Scheldt could not be juſtly conſidered as the ſole cauſe of a war between the nations.

Let us ſee what the anſwer was which Lord Grenville returned to this Memorial; it firſt of all denies the quality of a Public Functionary to M. Chauvelin, ſtyles his Memorial a Note, and it then condeſcends to inform him that if France is truly diſpoſed to be at peace with England, ſhe muſt renounce her views of aggrandiſement, and confine herſelf within her own territories.

There muſt be an audacity ſuperior even to that which dictated this anſwer, in the breaſt of that man who can, with a knowledge of theſe circumſtances, declare that you have been forced into this war, that it is a juſt and a neceſſary war; yet even this muſt yield to that degree of weakneſs which could be ſo deplorable as to give the aſſertion a moment's

moment's belief. I truſt, for the common ſenſe of my countrymen, that they do not believe it.

Although the arms of France were every where ſucceſsful againſt her invaders, and although ſhe could not but know that thoſe invaders were our friends and allies, ſtill ſhe preſerved her moderation. To this inſulting anſwer a Memorial was returned from M. Le Brun, in the name of the Executive Council of France, dated January 4th, 1793: in this Memorial a degree of wiſdom and capacity was manifeſt, which one would think muſt have made the Miniſter bluſh for the weakneſs and intemperance of his reply to the Memorial of the 17th of December; it contains a frankneſs of explanation, and a dignity of remonſtrance, which muſt have been productive of the happieſt conſequences, had not the determination of your Government long before been fixed by motives of policy, of the fallacy and inconſiſtency of which you have had but too clear and calamitous a demonſtration.

The Letters of Credence which this Memorial informed Lord Grenville had been ſent to M. Chauvelin, that no informality might ſtand in the way of accommodation, were not accepetd; and a perſonal interview, which M. Chauvelin requeſted of Lord Grenville, was likewiſe refuſed.

In a ſituation like this, a buſineſs ſo important in its nature could not long remain; and at length a letter from Lord Grenville, dated 24th of January, 1793, peremptorily ordering M. Chauvelin to quit the kingdom of England within eight days, put an end to all further views of peace through the medium of negociation.

But, as though the Executive Council of France were determined to fill up the meaſure of the folly of your Miniſter,

niſter, they had at this very criſis diſpatched M. Maret with freſh propoſals of accommodation: there are various reports of the particulars of theſe propoſals; theſe it is not material to my purpoſe to examine; ſuffice it the fact of his arrival in England has been eſtabliſhed. He could not have come to declare war.

M. Maret had not been long in this country before he was made acquainted with the ignominious expulſion of M. Chauvelin, and conſequently found himſelf unauthoriſed to open his commiſſion; his arrival, however, was announced to Lord Grenville, but no notice was taken of him by Government.

Do you ſtill heſitate upon whom to fix the charge of aggreſſion? Do you ſtill doubt if the war be not moſt juſt and neceſſary? Could I believe this, I would bring to your recollection other inſtances of inſult, of violence, of infraction of treaty on your part. What if I were to remind you of the Alien Bill; of the excluſive embargo laid upon veſſels laden with corn for France; of the officious and unrequeſted offer of ſupport to the States of Holland; of the reply from Lord Grenville to the French Memorial of the 4th of January, 1793; of the Bill prohibiting the circulation of Aſſignats? But I am perſuaded it is not neceſſary to inſiſt upon theſe, and many other proceedings of the ſame inimical tendency.

Finding every effort vain to eſtabliſh harmony between the two countries, their explanations unattended to, their offers rejected with ſcorn, and their Ambaſſadors driven from the country, the French were at length compelled to their only reſource, and accordingly on the 1ſt of February, 1793, the Republic was declared to be at war with the King of Great Britain and the Stadtholder of Holland.

From

From the facts I have thus ſtated to you, what are the obvious conſequences in your opinion? Do you not perceive plainly, the continued chain of deſign againſt France, which I have before mentioned to you? Do you not ſee that that deſign could not be carried into execution on our part, until, by the manœuvres of the Combined Powers, the French were driven to deſperation? Yes, we have forced the French to declare war, and then we pretend to call them the aggreſſors! Every man of plain underſtanding amongſt you muſt regard this poor pretence with the moſt ſovereign contempt. While he ſees, that by the violation of treaties, by the ſuſpicious ſilence we preſerved previous to the 10th of Auguſt, 1792; a ſilence indeed no longer ſuſpicious; and by the conduct we have purſued ſince that day, we have forfeited every right to urge the neceſſity or juſtice of this war; and that, on the contrary, we have been, and ought to conſider ourſelves directly as the authors and the beginners of it.

We now come, my Countrymen, to the examination of the only remaining plea in favor of the war, as to its juſtice; and this is the ground of fear; and it will be my buſineſs to demonſtrate to you, that even upon this ground your Miniſter will not be able to erect the ſlighteſt ſhelter for the motives which really did actuate his proceedings.

Fear, as far as it can affect the Government of any nation, may be excited juſtly by two cauſes only; the ſuperior ſtrength of its adverſary, or the progreſs of any opinion, which it may conſider as detrimental to its order or its exiſtence; and when one or both of theſe induce to war, that war has no doubt a claim to the title of a defenſive war, as I have already intimated. The queſtion is then,

then, by which of theſe cauſes our fears may have been excited in the preſent caſe?

That from the former of theſe cauſes any fears could have ariſen on our part, I believe it will be needleſs for me to prove; were it indeed neceſſary, the repreſentations and ſtatements of Mr. Pitt himſelf would furniſh me with ſufficient proof. Has he not repeatedly declared to you, that the people of England are unanimous, rich and ſtrong; while the French have been diſcordant, poor, and weak? What then had unanimity to fear from diſcord; what had riches to fear from poverty; what had ſtrength to fear from weakneſs? The throne of England ſtood amidſt the united affections of the people, our land was the land of plenty, our credit was unſhaken, and our commerce was univerſal; our navy was miſtreſs of the ſeas, and our armies were able and willing to fight the battles of their Sovereign. Behold our adverſary ſhaken by inteſtine broils, without money, without credit, without commerce, without food; her fleets rotting in her harbours, her armies lawleſs banditti, or the ſlaves of a momentary terror!

From the ſecond of theſe cauſes, then, our fears muſt have ariſen; we will examine for a moment with what degree of reaſon.

Opinion is powerful, either in proportion to its relation to truth, or from the nature of the contraſt which its preſent ſubject may form with ſome other that has immediately preceded it. I will obſerve then, that the rational fears of a Government, with reſpect to the progreſs of any certain opinion, will be regulated not only by the proportionate eaſe or difficulty of its admiſſion among the ſubjects of that Government, but alſo by a due conſideration of the effects,

effects which ſuch an opinion may probably produce if it gain admiſſion.

To apply theſe axioms, then, to the point in queſtion, we muſt ſuppoſe that the object of the war has been, to ſtop the progreſs of an opinion, which has produced the moſt fatal effects in France, into this country; grounded upon the fear of ſimilar conſequences, ſhould it gain a footing here. And we will ſuppoſe, too, this opinion to be wholly new, and to have ariſen in France; the enquiry will then be natural, what was the cauſe of its birth? The anſwer will be, a ſenſe of oppreſſion, and a conſequent abhorrence of oppreſſors. What is the ſubject of this opinion? A new form of Government. But whence the dreadful effects it has produced? The cloſe and naturally violent oppoſition of the advantages of the preſent ſubject of the new opinion, to the diſadvantages of the ſubject of the opinion which preceded it.

The ſtrength then of this opinion, and the nature of its operation in France, have derived their origin from the oppoſition of the ideas of a newly acquired Liberty, to thoſe of a vile and antient Slavery; although its exceſs muſt be aſcribed to adventitious cauſes. Let me aſk then, would theſe opinions, even if they had been admitted among you, have had the ſame degree of power, or would they have produced ſimilar conſequences in a country where tyranny was not known in an equal degree, and where conſequently no ſuch contraſt or oppoſition of ideas could have ariſen.

This, I think, is the clear ſtate of the caſe between France and your country. Whatever faults a corruption of the ſyſtem of your Government may have generated, and whatever neceſſity there may be for the removal of

that corruption, ſtill the ſyſtem remains replete with every good and energetic principle; and it may be reſtored to its antient efficacy, by means far different from thoſe which the weakneſs of human nature has rendered neceſſary for the eradication of a ſyſtem primarily vicious. Not ſo France! Her Government was founded in the ſuperiority which the cunning and the ambition of the few produced, over the ignorance and the debaſement of the many. Such a Government muſt be naturally and radically bad, and could not ſtand againſt the light of knowledge; and, amidſt the ſtruggles of prejudice and power, its fall muſt be tremendous.

But what, my Countrymen, had you to fear from the progreſs of this new opinion of Government? If good, would it not naturally ſtrengthen that very opinion which had already given to you the ſyſtem of which you were already in poſſeſſion? It was new to France, becauſe it was an opinion of liberty; but will an Engliſhman ſay it was new to him? Yet ſuppoſe this opinion actually to have been what it has been repreſented to be, ſubverſive of all order and good government, would the puny efforts of the ſword be effectual to deſtroy it, if a whole people were fooliſh or depraved enough to determine in its favor? But this conſideration relates rather to the policy of the war, upon which I have yet to addreſs you.

In ſtrict juſtice then, had your Miniſter a right to involve you in a war againſt an opinion, from the progreſs of which you had nothing to fear? Had he a right to make you appear, in the eſtimation of every honeſt man, more unjuſt in this reſpect than even your Allies have appeared? *They* have ſome ground for the plea of fear; they knew they held their power upon the ignorance of

their

their ſubjects. France, through the influence of a ſimilar ignorance, had permitted her Monarchs to poſſeſs a ſimilar power. The ſpell was at length broken, the dawn of Knowledge was beheld; and the Demon of Tyranny, unable to endure the light, fled at its approach! To prevent the ſpreading of this glorious light, became their immediate taſk; and it was a taſk worthy of ſuch characters!

To accompliſh this worthy, this deſirable end, war preſented the only probable means. Short-ſighted politicians! But do you believe it could be accompliſhed by any event of that war, which fell ſhort of the extirpation of the opinion againſt which it was waged? And could that extirpation be effected by any other means than by the annihilation of that people who had eſpouſed and maintained it? Impoſſible! This might perhaps have been endured from Deſpots; but have you, who have not only beheld the dawn, but who have alſo baſked in the meridian beams of knowledge; have you, who enjoy the glorious light of liberty, who have no cauſe to fear; have you, my Countrymen, become the partners in this inglorious enterprize; have you become participators in a league to deſtroy a nation ſtruggling for its freedom? You have! And if you do not retract in time this dreadful error, a name too gentle for the offence, I do not heſitate to predict, that ere long it will overwhelm you in ruin.

Am I then the friend of a faction? am I the defender of a tumult? am I the advocate of intemperance? Such I may be thought to be by ſome among you, but by the ſober and unprejudiced judgment I ſhall be recognized as the friend of truth and juſtice.

But are the monſtrous crimes, then, which have been perpetrated in France, and which have excited horror in the

breaſt of every man, to go unpuniſhed? And is it not a work worthy of every friend to peace, to deſtroy, if poſſible, the authors of ſuch enormities? Theſe crimes will not go unpuniſhed, nor will the perpetrators of them eſcape the reward which they deſerve! But let it be remembered, that theſe enormities, and their immediate authors, would probably never have been known, had not that league been formed againſt them; your acceſſion to which you will ever have reaſon to deplore.

I will grant, however, for a moment, that the exceſſes of which the French have been accuſed, were the neceſſary conſequences of the ſyſtem they had adopted, and that theſe exceſſes deſerved the moſt exemplary puniſhment. Yet upon what plea of juſtice (to repeat an obſervation I have made ſomewhere before) can any nation arrogate to itſelf the right of puniſhing another for its crimes? Upon what ground can this plea ariſe? Does it ariſe upon the ground of ſuperior virtue in the People, of ſuperior purity in the Legiſlation, of ſuperior wiſdom in the Governors? Happy ſhould I be to diſcover that country, whoſe excellency ſhould thus confer upon it ſo important a right.

I will grant further, that a plea thus founded would form a juſtification for the exerciſe of this right; I will even grant there may be ſuch a nation: but, let me aſk you, are you this nation, have you no crimes as a people to atone for? Is there no corruption in your preſent Legiſlation? is there no weakneſs or folly in your Governors? Do not longer urge this fooliſh claim. Where ſhall we ſeek, then, for this excellence? Shall we look to Germany, to Ruſſia, to Holland, to Spain, to Pruſſia, for ſo exalted a community? What do we ſee among theſe? The repeated crimes of avarice, of ambition, of treachery,

of

of blood! Are theſe the nations that dare to ſeize the rod of chaſtiſement? Men muſt mock them for their folly, and Heaven will confound them for their preſumption.

In what region, then, is this great, this happy nation to be found? My Countrymen, be no longer deceived; even the poſſeſſion of this ſuperiority would not confer ſuch exceſſive powers; how unjuſt, then, muſt that nation be, who poſſeſſing no ſuch excellence ſtill arrogates them to itſelf?

And now to draw this part of my diſcuſſion to a point, let me admoniſh you to conſider well what you are about. Behold a nation, which many ages has lain ſtretched beneath the foot of power, ſtruggling to elevate its head! Are its ſtruggles ſucceſsful? How many ſurrounding nations, its debaſed companions in ignorance and ſlavery, will be animated by its example to the ſame glorious deſign? The powers of tyranny will be ſhaken, and the tyrants themſelves will be overthrown! They ſee this, and unite to deſtroy the great intention in its birth; and ſhall a free and a happy nation be a party to this union? That ſtruggling nation is France; thoſe tyrants are the ſecret founders of the league of Pilnitz; and you are that free and happy nation. And the fact is, alas! too clearly aſcertained, that they did aſſail it, and that you became their friends and allies in the aſſault.

As friends and allies, then, you became the ſupporters of their meaſures; and if thoſe meaſures were unjuſt in their origin, and if there be any truth in the principle I laid down to you at the beginning of this addreſs, they became ſtill more unjuſt by their progreſs. You have made therefore theſe meaſures your own, at a time when they were debaſed, by accumulated injuſtice, and have conſequently incurred

incurred all the evil and reproach which muſt reſult at once, from the projection and from the ſupport of wrong.

You have but one way to purſue, by which you may regain the conſciouſneſs of integrity. Propoſe inſtantly terms of peace to the French nation, and let theſe terms be ſuch as may in ſome meaſure repair the injuſtice you have committed; do you want a motive to this neceſſary exertion? remember, then, thoſe antient principles towards which I looked at the beginning of this addreſs; remember, then, thoſe laws and rights, which at the price of their blood, your anceſtors purchaſed for you; remember, then, that in the moment you refuſe the claim of juſtice, you become unworthy of freedom! You are told the war in which you are engaged is a juſt and neceſſary war; you find the aſſertion to be untrue; you find that in carrying on this war, you are guilty of a manifeſt injuſtice, yet you cannot bear to retract, becauſe the terms of the retraction will be humiliating. Do you forget that humiliation is not debaſement, and that they who have been guilty of injuſtice will not be afraid of humiliation, if their repentance be ſincere. You call yourſelves a great nation; be candid, then, confeſs and repair your fault, and be worthy of the name.

But the national honour muſt not be ſacrificed. It has already been ſacrificed! and it is your duty, if poſſible, to reſtore it; exert your lawful influence, then, to procure the return of peace: this your Country demands of you, Juſtice demands it, your own Security and Honour demand it.

CHAP.

## CHAP. V.

I Have thus endeavoured to ſhew you that the French having diſcovered the debaſement of their ſituation, formed the deſign of regaining their dignity among the nations; that this deſign, juſt and glorious as it was, was ſecretly diſcouraged by the Courts, and afterwards openly oppoſed by the ſurrounding Potentates; that an intercourſe certainly exiſted between theſe hidden and avowed enemies; and that by their intrigues on the one hand, and their menaces on the other, the ſpirit of the people was diſordered. I have proved to you the injuſtice of theſe proceedings; and that you, as a nation, have adopted them, and have carried on a war of aggreſſion and wrong. From the conſideration of theſe facts, I have argued the neceſſity of your immediately propoſing terms of peace.

But as policy has been urged as an equal ground with juſtice for the proſecution of this war, I cannot conclude this addreſs without examining the truth of this doctrine; and you will therefore, I hope, patiently read what I have to offer upon this important part of the ſubject.

Important as it is, however, it is only ſo from a very prevalent and a very falſe idea; and it is, I confeſs to you, rather with a view of meeting this idea, that I am anxious to enter into this part of the diſcuſſion, than in obedience to the dictates of my own judgment; for I am firmly convinced that that war which is in its own nature unjuſt, can not be excuſed upon any pretended ground of policy whatever; nay, that it can never be reconciled in any ſhape, or under any circumſtances, with the principles of a real and wholeſome policy. Honeſty in the deſign and execution

of

of any meaſure, as well public as private, is ever the beſt policy.

But it appears to have been the buſineſs of every ſucceeding generation of ſtateſmen, to attempt either the perverſion or the overthrow of this doctrine; and their labours have been ſo far ſucceſsful, that we behold nations continually involving themſelves in all the toil, the hazard, and the expence of war, merely becauſe they have been told it was neceſſary to their glory and honor; and there hath accordingly ever been much leſs reluctance to incur the coſt, than to enquire into the real grounds and principles of the conteſt.

Fortunately however for its character and welfare, the world appears to manifeſt ſome inclination to arouze from ſo diſgraceful a ſtupor; it ſeems to be more deſirous than formerly to be acquainted with the nature, as well as with the expence of theſe mighty quarrels, which have ſo long covered it with ſlaughter; and the day, I hope, is faſt approaching, in which it will acquire ſufficient wiſdom and fortitude to give to the ideas of policy and juſtice, the veneration which their union demands.

Three queſtions, upon the ground of policy, appear naturally to ariſe in the breaſt of a Stateſman who is meditating war. Will the object of this war, if it be attained, prove an adequate recompence to my country for the mighty riſk it is about to run? Is there a reaſonable proſpect of ſucceſs in the enterpriſe? Have we the means of carrying on the war, without the hazard of incurring diſcontent at home, ſhould our hopes of ſucceſs be overthrown? Theſe conſiderations appear to be equally important, whether the deſign of the conteſt be to conquer a kingdom, or to overturn an opinion.

And

And as theſe are the queſtions which a ſtateſman ought to aſk himſelf, ſo they are the queſtions which his countrymen have a right to aſk him too; and if his anſwer be in the affirmative, they have a further right to enquire whether that anſwer be falſe or true.

Let us apply this principle to the point before us; let us ſee if there be any reality in the promiſes your Miniſter has made you of mighty benefits; let us enquire if the policy which has induced the Britiſh Cabinet to the preſent war, has been animated by proſpects of glory and advantage, which if realized would in ſome meaſure compenſate for its violence and injuſtice.

What then was the ſpecific object of the war? what were the glories and advantages, the proſpect of which could induce Mr. Pitt to plunge you into it? Do you aſk that Miniſter? from him you are unable to obtain an explicit anſwer; it is a queſtion which he has either never aſked himſelf, or the true reſult of which he cannot communicate to you. You muſt reſort then to the facts I have repreſented to you, and to the numerous circumſtances which have come palpably forward to notice, to gain the information ſo neceſſary for you to poſſeſs.

It has been in order to enable you to form ſomething like a decided opinion upon this head, that I have eſtabliſhed the certainty of our union with ſeveral powers, whoſe deſigns terminated not but in the utter conqueſt of France; and that I have aſſerted that the views of the Britiſh Cabinet were of a complexion very ſimilar, indeed, to thoſe of the Cabinets of our Allies. Yes! the deſtruction of the opinion which had ariſen in France, and the ſubjugation of the people which had embraced it, were doubtleſs

the combined objects which ſecretly influenced the deſigns and the operations of the powers in league againſt her.

Did not the facts I have already eſtabliſhed, ſufficiently warrant this deduction, I might adduce the reſerve, the equivocation, ſhall I ſay the poſitive falſehood of the aſſertions of Mr. Pitt. As to the certainty of this object, I might adduce the very nature and extent of our preparations for war, I might adduce the ſiege of Dunkirk, and the intended progreſs of the Duke of York along the coaſt of France; I might adduce the expedition of Earl Moira, and the cheriſhing of the diviſions already fomented in the interior of France, to prove the validity of it.

What is implied in the very meaning of the word alliance but an union of one power with another in a parity of deſign, whether of offence or reſiſtance; at leaſt if words and things have any meaning this muſt have been our idea. Were we not apprized of the full extent of the views of our allies at the time we joined them? If we were not, ſuch an ignorance is in the firſt place highly reprehenſible, and in the next place the diſcovery of the deceit would have warranted the diſſolution of the league upon which it was formed. The propoſition is ſelf-evident. We agreed to aſſiſt you in the completion of a certain deſign; we find other deſigns have ariſen, with theſe we have nothing to do.

If our deſign had really been to eſtabliſh order and a good Government in France; and if we had ſincerely believed that it was equally the deſign of our Allies, which fair as it may appear to be, would ſtill have been queſtionable as to its policy, ſuch would have been our language and our conduct upon the diſcovery of our miſtake, have we acted

thus

thus uprightly? have we, upon finding the iniquity of their proceedings, refuſed them our ſanction? Let the ſubſidies to the King of Pruſſia for the laſt campaign, let the loan of £.6,000000 to the Emperor for the next, anſwer this.

Having thus aſcertained the certain object of the war as clearly, I think, as it can be aſcertained, we will enquire what glory or advantage you would have derived, had the deſign been compleated even to its utmoſt extent.

Had the French nation been ſubjugated, the immediate conſequence would have been the partition of the fallen country among the conquerors; this, it is more than probable, would not have been effected in an amicable manner; the ambition which incites to the conqueſt of a nation is at once inſatiable and bloody, and the armies which had been ſacrificed to obtain the poſſeſſion of France muſt have been replaced by others to have fought for the diviſion of it.

Shall I grant you are at length ſucceſsful in this diviſion? Would the limits of your conqueſt thus eſtabliſhed have been deemed too ſacred to be touched by the hand of power? have you any ground to ſuppoſe this? has the hiſtory of paſt events, has the contemplation of human nature, has the progreſs of your experience, given you ſuch a ground? In addition, then, to the blood and treaſure which you muſt have laviſhed, to procure the poſſeſſion and the diviſion of this country, a vaſt army muſt have been continually kept up for the defence of your ſhare in it.

What ſolid advantages would it not require to balance this preponderating ſcale of loſs and burthen? Would all the taxes which could be extorted from this depreſſed people; would the aſſiſtance which our armies or our com-

merce could derive from this acceſſion of population be ſufficiently valuable? Would even the poſſeſſion of their Weſt India iſlands, an equally precarious and perhaps a more expenſive tenure, alter the balance in our favour? I cannot diſcern that this would be the caſe, while I am taught to believe that a nation may not only find its ruin in the too great extenſion of foreign territory, but of foreign commerce alſo.

Thus the advantages you would have gained, had theſe deſigns ſucceeded according to your utmoſt wiſh, would have been very far from equalling the certain ſacrifice for the acquiſition of this territory, and the accumulating and exceſſive expence of its preſervation.

You would not have patience to attend to me, if I were to dwell upon the glory which you would acquire by this ill-judged conqueſt. The King of Great Britain already enjoys unmoleſted the title of King of France, procured for him by the united folly and valour of his predeceſſors, and it would not add much ſurely to the brilliancy of this acquiſition, could you ſay we have again conquered France, and have half a dozen towns upon her coaſt. The world, inconſiſtent and fooliſh as it may yet be, has long had the wiſdom to deſire ſomething more ſolid, in the returns for an expenſive war, than the empty glory of conqueſt.

But in this ſtatement you will perceive I have viewed the matter in its moſt favourable light. I have forborne to mention the reluctance which twenty-five millions of people would certainly diſcover, to be thus parcelled out and governed by ſtrangers, nay by enemies; the continual and immenſe rebellions which would ariſe; the powerful combinations which would be formed, and, finally, the total

over-

overthrow and expulſion of the conquerors; events of the probability of which every man of ſober judgment amongſt you muſt be convinced.

Granting, however, that the object was of ſo much importance as to juſtify the utmoſt endeavours to attain it, the conſideration of a reaſonable hope of ſucceſs muſt next engage our attention, ſince how deſirable ſoever the accompliſhment of any project may appear to a wiſe man, he will not engage in it nevertheleſs againſt every probability in his diſfavour.

The ground upon which the reaſonable hope of ſucceſs may be entertained muſt be the contemplation of our own poſitive ſtrength, and the favourable compariſon which we ought to be able to form between that and the ſtrength of the adverſary; for the extent of our own reſources, be it never ſo great, will avail nothing, if that of the enemy's reſources be greater.

And in this reſpect we have been indeed lamentably deficient; our own reſources are indubitably great, and their greatneſs has corrupted our judgment: we have ſtudied them accurately, perhaps, but in the exceſs of our admiration at their extent, we have forgotten the magnitude of thoſe of France.

Indeed the calculation was of no ordinary nature, and in forming it the Miniſter who appears to have been content with ſetting figures againſt figures, could ſcarcely fail to be wrong; hence, in ſpite of mathematical demonſtration to the contrary, the French, with half-ſtarved and ill-paid troops, have triumphed during three campaigns over the immenſe armies of the Allies in every quarter. Shall we never diſcover our error, till it has been our utter ruin?

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The talents of Mr. Pitt, as a Financial and Commercial Miniſter, have been, I believe, univerſally acknowledged, and I am ready to pay my tribute of applauſe to him for the application he has made of theſe talents, to the elevation of the credit and the trade of this country: but behold here the cauſe of the miſchief; the very ſtudy by which an excellence like this is to be attained, is aſſuredly inimical to thoſe enlightened contemplations, thoſe enlarged principles, which diſtinguiſh the wiſe and ennobled Stateſman from the ingenious and accurate Financier; it weakens the powers of the judgment, it confines and degrades the operation of the mind.

A man, therefore, who has long been accuſtomed to look for the evident reſult of a certain combination of figures, becomes by degrees inſenſible of the power of other combinations, and of the extent of other conſequences. The world is in commotion; nations are convulſed by new and extraordinary cauſes; he reſorts to his old calculations, and with his accuſtomed ſecurity predicts the ſucceſs of the one, and the downfall of the other: he has ſeen wars before, and he has learnt the method of raiſing money for the neceſſary expences of them; his country is engaged in a war now, and becauſe one war is like another, in all the horrid appearances of animoſity and devaſtation, he never troubles himſelf to enquire into the nature of its origin, but concludes that his calculations, as they have had power under certain circumſtances, muſt produce under every change of circumſtances the ſame effect.

Thus Mr. Pitt, long engaged in the management of the domeſtic concerns of the Britiſh nation, and immerſed in figures neceſſary for the demonſtrations appropriate to ſuch con-

concerns, forgets, when engaged in a war of opinion, to inveſtigate the nature of that force which it is not in the power of figures to reach: the reſources that a mighty nation calls forth from an unanimous and enthuſiaſtic ſpirit of liberty, bid defiance, in their nature and extent, to the cold methodical inveſtigation of a few poor units: but it is by the combination of units alone he has been uſed to reckon; and he is at length amazed to behold the hidden and unſuſpected riches of a people brought forth, of whom from the irrefragable influence of figures, he has juſt demonſtrated the miſerable poverty, and predicted the utter ruin.

But have not theſe riches been the produce of an unexampled oppreſſion; and could Mr. Pitt reckon upon the produce of an unexampled oppreſſion? As a man of figures perhaps he could not, but as a Stateſman he ought to have foreſeen and provided for this; he ought to have reflected that, preſſed as the French were on every ſide, they would ſeize the means within their power of providing for their defence; he ought to have known that, although we might chuſe to denominate a certain mode of raſing money, oppreſſion, or although it might in fact be ſuch, they would conſider it as perfectly defenſible; he ought to have learnt, in fact, that what ſome nations pretend to cenſure as a vice, others will applaud as a virtue; and that policy or neceſſity, and not the innate love of virtue or hatred of vice, will produce this mighty difference.

While therefore the Engliſh nation, full of virtue and religion, were deploring the day which witneſſed the violence and impiety of the ruling party in France, the French nation was triumphing over the confiſcations of the eſtates of emigrated Nobleſſe and nonjuring Clergy.

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By this deplorable ignorance how greatly have we been miſled! impreſſed, from their outward diſtreſſes, with the idea of the inability of the French to ſuſtain the conflict, we did not expect to ſee them ſtruggle through the firſt campaign; yet at this moment we behold them the conquerors of Belgium; the maſters of the coaſt from one end of the channel to the other; their ſtandard is flying over the bay of Roſas; and the capital of Holland has fallen before them!

If theſe things are ſo, with what reaſonable hope of ſucceſs could we enter into this conteſt? a nation high indeed in reputation, full of the love of liberty, brave, and hating tyranny and tyrants, but burthened with an enormous debt, and groaning under the weight of proportionate taxes; and miſled, by falſe or mutilated repreſentations, againſt a people already exaſperated againſt their invaders, full of enthuſiaſm for the cauſe in which they were engaged; equally brave and more numerous than ourſelves, and reſolved to conquer or to die. Our Allies a combination of ſlaves, and their maſters divided by ſecret views; ſelfiſh, low and debaſed, poor, crafty and deſigning. The French united in one common cauſe, in their own country, and determined to be free. Could ſuch a nation fall in ſuch a conteſt?

Shall I ſay we had numerous and well-diſciplined armies to ſend into the field; will not Hiſtory preſent us with numerous inſtances of the regular forces of diſcipline eaſily overthrown by the holy ardor with which a love of liberty has inſpired the boſoms of rude unformed hordes. Even your own country has to boaſt, that Roman valor and Roman diſcipline were not able to ſubdue that bold, that daring

daring ſpirit which animated the rude bands of your anceſtors. Could we then expect to conquer a nation who were not only animated by the ſame ſpirit, but who were able alſo to oppoſe diſcipline to diſcipline, and ſtrength to ſtrength? Could reaſon have dictated ſo extravagant a hope? could ſound policy have produced ſo wild an expectation?

No man has a right to expect or demand from another the exerciſe of powers which Heaven has not thought fit to beſtow upon mortality; but from him who aſſumes the guidance of a great nation, the manifeſtation of thoſe powers which have been witneſſed in men, ſimilarly elevated, is indiſpenſible, and his fellow-ſubjects have a clear and undoubted right to expect it. When I am told, therefore, that it is impoſſible for any man, however exalted his talents may be, to anticipate or anſwer for the events of war, and that conſequently the unexpected ſucceſſes of the French furniſh no argument of the impolicy of entering into this war; I anſwer, that as fas as ſuch events depended upon the mere oppoſition of force to force, it is impoſſible that Mr. Pitt or any other man could foreſee them; but as far as they depended upon the ſpirit that produced the conteſt, and upon the various other circumſtances that attended its birth, it was to be expected from Mr. Pitt, that he ſhould have foreſeen them, and that he ſhould have acted accordingly.

But it was not the pure ſpirit of liberty which impelled the French, they had no ſettled principles, they were influenced by the Demon of Anarchy, they were madmen, and they fought in deſpair. Thus have we thought fit to characteriſe the energy and the valor of the French. Be

this character falſe or true, however, it matters not; it is ſufficient for me that they imagined they fought for liberty; if under the influence of an univerſal delirium, that nation miſtook licentiouſneſs for freedom, ſtill, while the delirium laſted, the enthuſiaſm would be equal. Alas! the delirium has laſted for years, and it will laſt for ever!

Whether then the liberty for which the French were preparing to fight were real or imaginary, ſtill I contend, that the impolicy of engaging in the conflict againſt them, is equally apparent. But I am not afraid to aſſert, that no doubt would have been entertained of the exiſtence of real and animated principles of truth among the French, by any Stateſman who had been willing, or who was able, to trace to their origin, the circumſtances which combined to produce this mighty Revolution in their Government.

There may be certain periods in the moral and phyſical exiſtence of the world, in which, from concurrent cauſes, opinion becomes irreſiſtible; and it is when, in ſuch eventful periods, a momentary policy is oppoſed to its gigantic progreſs, that the uſual connection between cauſes and effects ſeems to be diſordered, and that the politician, who has failed to develope thoſe cauſes, is diſmayed and loſt in the tremendous confuſion.

But, my Countrymen, were we to enquire into the policy of attempting to penetrate into a country which art and which nature have united to defend, ſhould we not at once wonder at and deplore that ill-fated moment of weakneſs which gave birth to the idea? Have not hiſtory and experience taught us the folly of ſuch an enterpriſe? Could we look forward to ſucceſs in the poor endeavour to conquer a nation, whom, when they were the ſlaves of deſpotiſm, we could not ſubdue, but through the aids of

treachery

treachery and ſuperſtition; and whom, when we had conquered them, we could not long retain in ſubjection? Policy and reaſon forbad the proſpect.

It is in vain that it was urged, that the ſoldiers of France were dragged into the field, and that brandy was the ſtimulative of their courage; every ſober reflection which aroſe upon the aſſertion, aroſe only to deride its conſummate abſurdity; every fact which had happened, has demonſtrated its falſehood. If indeed any thing could exceed its puerility, it would be the puerility of the attempt to confute it.

Whether you conſider, then, the natural ſtrength of opinion itſelf, or the particular opinion which the French had imbibed, or the circumſtances which produced it, or the time at which it aroſe, or the nature of the force you had to oppoſe to it, you will perceive that the conteſt was at once unnatural and unequal on your part, and, conſequently, that no reaſonable hope of ſucceſs in the proſecution of it could be entertained by you.

What facts, what arguments might there not be drawn from hiſtory, and from experience, to eſtabliſh the folly of all attempts to overcome opinion by the ſword! And with what weapon has your Miniſter attempted to oppoſe the opinion he affects to dread, but the ſword? When the attempt was planned, imbecility and impolicy muſt ſurely have ruled the hour.

It now remains to enquire, whether we had the means of carrying on the war, without the hazard of injury or diſcontent at home, in caſe our hopes of ſucceſs ſhould be fruſtrated.

That nation muſt be in a very flouriſhing condition indeed, which, having been defeated in a war, does not at

once feel and manifeſt ſome degree of diſcontent, however policy might have juſtified its entering into that war, from the greatneſs of the object, or the reaſonableneſs of the hope of ſucceſs.

The fact is, an event of ſo unfortunate a nature will certainly produce a degree of diſcontent in any nation, but neither in that degree, or in its duration, will it be formidable to the Government, if the ſtate of that nation be ſolid and permanently good; but if, on the contrary, that nation, however flouriſhing in appearance, be in reality overwhelmed with debt and poverty, a failure may produce diſcontent at once important and alarming. To a nation thus diſtreſſed, a war, even where the object was advantageous, and the hopes of ſucceſs were reaſonable, would prove an improvident riſk.

What then was the ſituation of this kingdom at the time when it entered into this war? The anſwer will be brief. It was cultivating many commercial advantages; but it was alſo ſtruggling under a debt of two hundred and fifty millions; a ſum eaſily deſcribed indeed upon paper, but ſeverely felt in the dreadful weight of its intereſt, which the mighty public creditor wrings from the hand of induſtry and want!

The ſimple circumſtance of ſo large a debt would, it might be ſuppoſed, have produced a pauſe before you could enter into a war, even of poſſible glory and advantage; and the impolicy of adding to a burthen already enormous, might, under ſuch a circumſtance, have appeared worthy of ſome conſideration. But when it was remembered, that of that ſum near one hundred millions were incurred, a very few years before, in a war founded upon very ſimilar principles, and in which we had been ſignally diſ-

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graced and overthrown, could any Miniſter, who was not determined right or wrong to go to war, but dread leſt the addition of many millions, by a new war, to that debt, might probably produce a national diſguſt, ſhould the purpoſe for which they were to be raiſed, by any accident, be defeated.

Wherever there is a probability of ſucceſs, there is at leaſt a poſſibility of failure; will policy, therefore, juſtify the Government of England, burthened as it thus was, for entering into this war with France, granting the object to have been advantageous to its intereſts, where failure muſt inevitably be attended with diſcontent, and where it might produce total ruin.

But when the object was not only diſadvantageous, but unjuſt and inglorious; when the hopes of ſucceſs were founded neither upon policy or reaſon, where ſhall we ſeek for juſtification for ruſhing headlong into war?

I confeſs it appears difficult to me, to conceive how the Miniſter could expect to reconcile the meaſure of the preſent war, to a nation thus unhappily ſituated, in caſe it were not crowned with ſucceſs, becauſe he muſt have known, that the diſpoſition of mankind ever leads them to the prejudiced and narrow judgment which is regulated by events; and that, conſequently, the applauſe which a concurrence of ſplendid victories would produce, would be changed to murmurs and diſcontent in the moment of defeat.

This indeed, it ſeems, furniſhes Mr. Pitt for an excuſe for not making propoſals of peace to the French at this moment; but does not ſuch an excuſe relate rather to his perſonal ſafety, than to the public benefit; ſince, had he conſulted the latter in preference to the former, he would never have plunged you into a conteſt, for the continuance

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of which ſuch an excuſe would be neceſſary; and from which, the longer it is carried on, the more likely are diſgrace and ruin finally to enſue.

The eaſineſs with which money is raiſed by a ſtate, is the ſource from which ſo direful a calamity is to be feared, ſince it ſerves the two-fold evil purpoſe of facilitating the execution of any meaſures the Miniſter may think proper to adopt, however impolitic in their origin, or miſchievous in their conſequences; and of blinding the eyes and the judgment of the people, to the real extent of the public expenditure. This is a very fooliſh and improvident conduct, and the fallacy muſt one day or other be diſcovered; and when the eyes of that people who, in the darkneſs of error, had vainly imagined themſelves in the midſt of proſperity, are opened upon deſtruction, the conſequences may eaſily be foreſeen by the moſt ſhallow politician.

And if this moment is to be haſtened by any particular event, that event will be the unſucceſsful concluſion of a war againſt opinion; becauſe there will not be, in that caſe, any feaſible excuſe to be offered for having undertaken that war, ſince the very opinion againſt which we may have been fighting, will obtain with the people in proportion to our want of ſucceſs in the enterprize; and this is in a great meaſure the nature of the preſent war, if credit be given to thoſe who have undertaken it.

Be it yours, then, to judge how far, under theſe circumſtances, the war againſt France has originated in policy; whether the object be what I have endeavoured to ſhew it to be, or what it has been repreſented by the Allied Powers, it appears to be equally futile and impolitic; the hope of ſucceſs I have ſhewn to be ſimilarly weak; and what the conſequences of diſappointment, and a vexatious accumulation of poverty and taxes would be, in the

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preſent ſtate of the public mind, it does not, I believe, require a very uncommon ſagacity to diſcern.

## CONCLUSION.

I HAVE obſerved to you, in the former part of this addreſs, that by a concurrence of circumſtances, that action, which in its origin was impolitic, might be rendered both politic and neceſſary in its progreſs; it may be therefore urged, that however unjuſt or impolitic the preſent war may have been in the firſt inſtance, its continuance is now rendered abſolutely neceſſary, from the ſituation of affairs. I will dedicate a few moments to the diſcuſſion of this idea, and then conclude my addreſs.

You are told, that the French nation are not in a condition to ſuſtain the conflict much longer; that they have drained their reſources to the laſt, and that their preſent efforts are the efforts of fear and deſperation.

How difficult it may be to obtain that clear and certain information, upon this important head, which is neceſſary to warrant ſo bold an aſſertion, may perhaps be ſeen by the fallacy of ſimilar aſſertions, made three years ago, by the defenders of the war, when indeed there was a much better colour for them than there is now. You were then repeatedly told, that the French were driven to their laſt ſtake; you were told, that from the preſſure of exterior force and interior want and diſcord, it was clearly demonſtrable they muſt ſhortly fall. Year after year has the tale been reſounded in your ears; yet year after year have they continued to drive your armies before them, and now that they have made themſelves maſters of the Netherlands and of Holland, now that their Government has acquired a natu-

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ral ſtrength from the lapſe of time, now that they have detached from the league the King of Pruſſia, and the Grand Duke of Tuſcany, have added to the ſtrength of their marine, and have enriched themſelves with your ſpoils and with the ſpoils of your Allies, you pleaſe yourſelves with the hope that they muſt yield to your arms.

The fact is, the repreſentation originates in the miſtake to which, as I have obſerved, a Miniſter of figures is peculiarly liable; the nature of the French reſources is ſuch as bids defiance to the inveſtigation of mathematics. The people are diſtreſt, we immediately conclude the Government muſt be diſtreſt too; the concluſion is a falſe one, and juſtified by no ideas which are drawn from a juſt application of the facts with which experience and hiſtory abound. Mr. Pitt may tell you the French cannot ſtand, becauſe they have poverty, famine, and rebellion to cope with: they had poverty, famine, and rebellion to cope with three years ago, and yet they remain a mighty power. That which has once happened may happen again; and granting credit to the repreſentations of Mr. Pitt, ſhould they be able to bear up three years longer, would your patience or your reſources be adequate to abide the conſequence?

The fluctuating ſtate of the ruling powers in France, is adduced as another reaſon why, with policy, we cannot offer terms of peace to that nation; it is contended, that the peace which is concluded to-day with one ſet of men, may be denied and broken by another ſet of men to-morrow.

This objection is doubly falſe. It is falſe in its principle, if the principle upon which we make peace with other powers be a true one; and it is morally falſe, for it is evidently uſed as a pretext, and conſequently known to

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be untrue by thoſe who uſe it. Have we ever conſidered the unſtable nature of a Government like Turkey, where no man, whatever his wiſdom or his rank, or his power may be, is certain for a day together of his ſafety from the private bow-ſtring, or from public outrage, when we have found it ſuit our convenience to be at peace with that Government? In other words, where is the Government with whom we have been able to conclude that ſecure peace for which we at this moment affect to wiſh. Hitherto we have been content with the uſual idea of ſecurity in making peace, that is, that neither party would break the treaty, till is ſquared with their ideas of policy to do ſo. Now we are to be ſatisfied with nothing ſhort of abſtract ideas of ſecurity, and have the indecency to cenſure the French for perfidy, before we have a ſingle inſtance of it to produce. If ſuch a conduct is not a pretext to cover the abſolute determination of your Miniſter not to make peace at any rate, words no longer contain their accumſtomed meaning, or facts their inference; and if any thing were wanting to detect the fallacy of this pretext, I might add, the objection which is brought to the character of the French nation, who are ſaid to be bound by no ties of religion or morality.

With what contempt muſt ſuch an objection as this be marked, by every ſober man who has read the hiſtory of nations, and who has contemplated the beauties of religion? Will ſuch a man eſteem the religion of the Monarchs of Europe as the religion of ſincerity and truth? will ſuch a man conſider the zeal of their Miniſters as the pure and holy zeal of piety? I really bluſh while I aſk the queſtion. Let the wars, the devaſtations, the luxury, the intrigues, the injuſtice which have marked the footſteps of theſe holy men, proclaim in its proper character this ſolemn mockery to the world.

But I muſt remark to you, that whatever may have been the change of parties in France, the change has ever been marked by a ſtronger attachment to the form of Government which had been newly adopted in that country, to the utter confuſion of the politicians of Europe. Who did not expect that the death of the King, or the execution of the Deputies, or the beheading of the wretched Robeſpierre, or the fate of Carrier, would produce a counter revolution? yet what impreſſion has any one of theſe events made, what force have they had, even all of them together?

The fact is, France has been diſtracted by the efforts of thoſe ambitious and deſigning men, who, as I have mentioned to you ſomewhere before, are ever upon the watch to mix with an agitated people, and take advantage of the general perturbation: but, in the midſt of this diſtraction, the ſame ſentiment continued to actuate the public mind; this your Miniſter either did not perceive, or would not confeſs; but, in either caſe, the error or the crime was equal; the ſame ſentiment retains its original energy, and I repeat, that whether it be a falſe or a real energy, while its influence continues, a war like the preſent muſt be impolitic, and if any man among you has diſcovered unequivocal tokens of its failure, it is his duty to ſhew them to his country.

But, however unjuſt and impolitic it might have been to enter into this war, we are now engaged in it, and we muſt carry it on at all events: the French, ſays Mr. Pitt, preſent their moderation to Holland; their vengeance they reſerve for you. Is this true? How then do you propoſe to elude this vengeance? by provoking ſtill further the power you cannot conquer? If the Britiſh nation will but be unanimous, they muſt conquer! Have they not hitherto been unanimous? Was the war entered into without the unanimous conſent of the Britiſh nation, that is to ſay againſt the

the ſentiments of the majority of that nation? this certainly was the fact, for they who underſtand the language of Miniſters well know, that when they call to unanimity, they ſenſibly perceive the majority is againſt them.

And, in order to animate you to unanimity, you are promiſed the early aſſiſtance of the Emperor with 200,000 men: with ſo immenſe a force, it is not doubted but the French will be eaſily overthrown, and the glorious purpoſes of the Allies accompliſhed: this aſſiſtance you have a right to expect, becauſe you have agreed to advance £.6,000000 for it.

When the duplicity of the Auſtrian Court is conſidered, and the difficulties which muſt attend the bringing into the field ſo large a body of troops; when the recent defection of its friend and ally the King of Pruſſia is remembered, it requires no ſmall degree of credulity to believe that ſuch a promiſe will be very punctually fulfilled: but I am willing to grant that it may be fulfilled, that 200,000 men will be brought at once to the combat, yet ſtill there is not a reaſonable probability that with this force the French will be overcome; the increaſe of force againſt them will, as it always has done, produce at once an increaſe and concentration of force on their part, and if we argue from what has uniformly happened hitherto, we have little room for doubt but that a repetition of defeat and diſgrace will be the conſequence.

Let me ſeriouſly intreat you, my countrymen, to conſider well the riſk you run, and for what it is run: are you the conquerors, what do you gain? Common ſenſe and truth will juſtify the ſtatement I have made to you of what you will gain. Are you defeated? reflect, I beſeech you; are you defeated? you muſt ſtand an object of contempt, in the eyes of Europe and of poſterity.

Connected as you unfortunately are with continental politics, you muſt not, you cannot with policy continue contumaciouſly to oppoſe an opinion which is making ſuch powerful inroads: every good Government has reaſon to applaud and to adopt good opinions, if they tend to improvement; it has no reaſon to fear the exterior progreſs of bad opinions, and it is a ſign of weakneſs or of corruption, or of both, in that Government that has the folly to attempt the overthrow of an opinion which a great body of people have thought proper to adopt.

I am ſenſible that I omit numerous arguments which might be brought forward, to prove the impolicy of carrying on the war under the preſent circumſtances, but there is certainly the leſs neceſſity for urging them now, as many of them have been ſo ingeniouſly and ably advanced by the Duke of Bedford, Lord Stanhope, Mr. Fox, and other gentlemen in Parliament; and indeed it is from this conſideration, and from a fear of wearying your patience, that I have not dwelt at length upon the arguments I have offered upon this head.

I ſhall now conclude this long addreſs, with requeſting you will examine for yourſelves how far the facts I have mentioned are true, and the concluſions I have drawn from them warrantable. I have endeavoured to trace the war to its ſource, and have therefore, perhaps, been compelled to tread, in ſome degree, the path that has been trodden before; but this muſt be the fate, more or leſs, of every enquirer after truth. What has been ſtated, has been ſtated, I hope, with clearneſs. In the inferences I have drawn, there may be the errors of weakneſs, but I have a ſafe conſcience that the criminality of deceit will not be found.

FINIS.

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